



'If I were Lord of Tartary.'

Radiant



Reading

33412
The
Shining Hour

Edited by

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With 8 Coloured Pictures by

RENE CLOKE

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RADIANT READING

A NEW series of class reading-books for pupils of seven years and upwards. The books are graded in the following order :

1. SUNBEAMS	160 pages
2. BLUE SKIES	176 pages
3. THE SHINING HOUR	192 pages
4. THE GLEAMING ROAD	224 pages
5. OVER THE HILLS	256 pages

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Radiant
Reading
Method

PREFACE

THIS book is devised in accordance with the *Radiant Reading Method*, of which a brief summary is given below. (For a detailed description see the pamphlet *The Radiant Reading Method*, which the Publishers will be glad to forward, free of charge.)

THE RADIANT READING METHOD

1. Before any reading is attempted, the pupil should ascertain for himself the meanings of any unfamiliar words occurring in the passage. Such words are given, in heavy type, at the head of each lesson. In this connection it is strongly recommended that pupils be trained, as early as possible, to use a simple dictionary. (Note.—The words at the head of each lesson are *not* 'spelling words'; nor are they necessarily the *only* new words in the passage.)

2. The passage is read *silently* by the class, each pupil being required to 'find out' suitable answers to the questions which appear, in small type, at the head of each lesson.

3. The passage is considered by the class under the guidance of the teacher, who (a) obtains, from various pupils, answers to the preliminary questions, and (b) reads the passage, paragraph by paragraph,

clearing away *en route* any remaining verbal or other difficulties.

4. By this time the class will have grasped the full meaning of the passage, which is now, and only now, read by individual pupils.

It will be seen that the keynote of the *Radiant Reading Method* is the complete understanding of the passage before any reading aloud by the pupils is attempted.

For obvious reasons, the preliminary apparatus of words and questions has, as a rule, been omitted from the poems ; the questions, too, have been omitted from the play *The Queen Escapes*. It is suggested that, when taking such lessons, the teacher should pass over the earlier part of the *Method*, beginning at Stage 3 (*b*) above.

It remains to be added that the poems have been chosen particularly with a view to the opportunities which they offer for purposes of 'dramatic' rendering, speech-training, or individual illustration work. The play has been specially devised for acting with as much or as little in the way of properties as it may be convenient to provide.

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1. THE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM.

Words :

folly

wisdom

- Find out :*
- (1) Why were the people of Gotham called 'wise'?
 - (2) About what did the two men of Gotham quarrel?
 - ✓ (3) Was the third man of Gotham's lesson a good one or a bad one? Why?

In days of long ago, the people of Gotham, a village near Nottingham, were famous for their folly. No matter what they tried to do, they would set about it in the most stupid manner. All the world laughed at their mistakes, and, in fun, called them the 'wise men of Gotham,' but that did not worry these simple folk.

Here is one story about them.

A man of Gotham was going to Nottingham Market to buy sheep. On Nottingham Bridge he met another man of Gotham, who was coming from the market.

‘Well met!’ said they to each other.

‘Where are you going, neighbour?’ asked the one who was returning from the market.

‘To Nottingham Market, to buy sheep,’ replied the other.

‘To buy sheep!’ exclaimed the first. ‘Pray tell me, which way will you bring them home?’

‘Why, across this bridge,’ answered he who was going to market.

Now the other man of Gotham, who loved to find fault with everything, was not pleased at that. ‘By Robin Hood!’ he cried. ‘You shall not bring your sheep back by this bridge!’

‘By Little John!’ shouted the other. ‘I shall bring them back this way if I please!’

‘You shall not!’ cried the first.

‘But I shall!’ declared the other.

Then the two men of Gotham began to stamp about the bridge, hitting the ground with their sticks, as if the whole flock of sheep were already there.

‘Hold back your sheep there!’ cried the one.



‘Let them pass!’ exclaimed the other. ‘And be more careful with your stick, lest you make my flock leap the bridge into the river!’

So they went at it, running this way and that, until a third man of Gotham appeared. He had come from Nottingham Market, and on his horse’s back was a sack of meal which he had bought there.

For a few minutes he looked on in silence as his neighbours fought, then he held up his hands and said, 'Peace, peace, good fellows! When will you learn wisdom? Pray, help me to lift this sack of meal on my shoulders, and I shall teach you a lesson worth the knowing.'

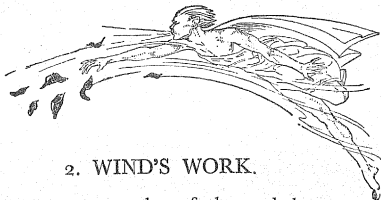
When they had helped him with the sack, the third man of Gotham went to the edge of the bridge, opened the mouth of the sack, and emptied the meal into the river which flowed beneath. As he shook out the sack, he said, 'Tell me, good neighbours, how much meal is in the sack now?'

'Why, none,' the others answered together.

'Well said,' replied he. 'Then there is as much sense in your foolish heads, for a moment ago you were fighting about sheep which are not here at all.'

Now I leave you to judge, if you can, which was the wisest of these three men of Gotham.

*Retold from 'The Merry Tales
of the Men of Gotham.'*



2. WIND'S WORK.

Kate rose up early as fresh as a lark,
Almost in time to see vanish the dark ;
Jack rather later, bouncing from bed,
Saw fade in the dawn's cheek the last flush of red:
 Yet who knows
 When the wind rose ?

Kate went to watch the new lambs at their play
And stroke the white calf born yesterday ;
Jack sought the woods where trees grow tall
As who would learn to swarm them all :
 Yet who knows
 Where the wind goes ?

Kate has sown candytuft, lupins and peas,
Carnations, forget-me-not and heart's-ease ;
Jack has sown cherry-pie, marigold,
Love-that-lies-bleeding and snapdragons bold :
 But who knows
 What the wind sows ?

Kate knows a thing or two useful at home,
 Darns like a fairy, and churns like a gnome ;
 Jack is a wise man at shaping a stick,
 Once he's in the saddle the pony may kick.
 But hark to the wind how it blows !
 None comes, none goes,
 None reaps or mows,
 No friends turn foes,
 No hedge bears sloes,
 And no cock crows,
 But the wind knows !

T. Sturge Moore.

THE COMING STORM.

The tree-tops rustle, the tree-tops wave,
 They hustle, they rustle, and down in a cave
 The winds are murmuring, ready to rave.

The skies are dimming ; the birds fly low,
 Skimming and swimming, their wings are slow ;
 They float, they are carried, they scarcely go.

The dead leaves hurry ; the waters, too,
 Hurry and scurry ; as if they knew
 A storm was at hand ; the smoke is blue.

W. B. Rands.



3. THE NORTH WIND'S GIFTS.—I.

Words : **store-house** **dishes**
 provide **inn**

- Find out :* (1) Why did the boy visit the North Wind ?
(2) What gift did the North Wind give him ?
(3) What happened to this gift ?

Once upon a time there was a woman who had one son. As she was old and feeble, her son had to go to the store-house to fetch the meal for their porridge.

As he was leaving the store-house, with a bag of meal on his back, up came the North Wind, puffing and blowing. He caught up

the meal, and away he went with it through the air.

The lad went back into the store-house for more ; but when he came out again on the steps, the North Wind carried off the meal as he had done before. More than that, he did so the third time.

At this the lad became very angry, so he made up his mind to go and see the North Wind, so that he might ask him to give back the meal.

The way was long, and he walked and walked ; but at last he came to the North Wind's house. ' Good-day ! ' said the lad, ' and thank you for coming to see us yesterday.'

' GOOD-DAY ! ' answered the North Wind, for his voice was loud and gruff, ' AND THANKS FOR COMING TO SEE ME. WHAT DO YOU WANT ? '

' Oh,' replied the lad, ' I only wished to ask you to give me back the meal which you took from me yesterday. You see, we haven't much to live on, and if you snap up the little that we have, we shall starve, without a doubt.'

' I haven't got your meal,' declared the North Wind. ' However, if you are in such need, here is a cloth which will provide everything

you want, if you only say, "Cloth, spread yourself, and serve up all kinds of good dishes!"'

The lad was very well pleased at this. As the way home was long, and he could not reach there in one day, he turned into an inn for the night. When he was going to sit down to supper, he laid the cloth on a table in the corner, and said, 'Cloth, spread yourself, and serve up all kinds of good dishes!'

He had scarcely spoken when the cloth did as it was bidden. The table was covered with splendid food of every kind!

All who stood by thought what a fine cloth this was, but most of all the inn-keeper's wife. So, in the middle of the night, when everyone was fast asleep, she took the lad's cloth and put another, just like it, in its place. Yet this cloth could not serve up so much as a bit of dry bread.

When the lad woke, he took the cloth and went off with it, and that day he reached his mother's home.

'Now,' said he, 'I've been to the North Wind's house. A good fellow he is, too, for he gave me this cloth. When I say to it, "Cloth, spread yourself, and serve up all kinds of good dishes!" it provides any sort of food I want.'

‘All very true, I dare say,’ said his mother ;
 ‘but I shall not believe it till I see it.’

So the lad made haste, laid the cloth on the table, and said, ‘Cloth, spread yourself, and serve up all kinds of good dishes!’ Yet never a bit of dry bread did the cloth serve up.

‘Did I not say that seeing is believing?’ said the boy’s mother.

‘Well, there’s no help for it but to go to the North Wind again,’ said the lad ; and away he went.

4. THE NORTH WIND’S GIFTS.—II.

Words : ram reward to lay on

Find out : (1) What was the second of the North Wind’s gifts? / What happened to it? ✓

(2) What was the third gift? /

(3) Which of the three gifts do you think was of most value to the boy? \ Why? \

Late in the afternoon he came to where the North Wind lived. ‘Good evening!’ said he.

‘GOOD EVENING!’ said the North Wind.



RENE
CLOKE

'I want to be paid for that meal of ours which you took,' said the lad; 'for the cloth that you gave me is not worth a penny.'

'I have no money,' said the North Wind; 'but yonder is a ram which makes golden coins as soon as you say to it, "Ram, ram, make money!" You may take that, if you like.'

The lad thought this a fine reward for his meal, and set off for home with the ram. As it happened, that night he turned into the same inn where he had slept before.

Before he called for anything, the lad tried the truth of what the North Wind had said of the ram. The wind had spoken truly, for the ram made a pile of golden coins. When the inn-keeper saw this, he thought that it was a ram worth having. So, when the lad was asleep, he took another ram, which could not make golden coins, and he changed the two.

Next morning, off went the lad leading the ram. When he reached home, he said to his mother, 'After all, the North Wind is a kind fellow. He has given me a ram which can make golden coins if I say, "Ram, ram, make money!"'

'All very true, I dare say,' said his mother, 'but I shall not believe such nonsense until I see the coins made.'

‘Ram, ram, make money!’ said the lad; but the ram did not make any money.

So back again went the lad to the North Wind and roused him. ‘The ram was worth nothing,’ he said, ‘so I must be paid for my meal.’

‘Well,’ said the North Wind, ‘I’ve nothing else to give you but that old stick in the corner yonder. It’s a stick of such a kind that if you say, “Stick, stick, lay on!” it lays on until you say, “Stick, stick, now stop!”’

Away went the lad, carrying the stick with him, and once more he turned into the inn. By this time, however, he had guessed where his cloth and his ram were. So he lay down at once on the bench, and began to snore as if he were asleep.

Now the inn-keeper, who saw the stick and thought that it must be worth something, found one which was like it. When he heard the lad snore, he was going to change the two; but just as the inn-keeper was about to take the boy’s stick, the lad called out, ‘Stick, stick, lay on!’

So the stick began to beat the innkeeper till he jumped over chairs and tables and benches, and roared out, ‘Oh, my back! Oh, my back! Bid your stick be still, and you shall have both your cloth and your ram!’

When the lad thought that the inn-keeper had had enough, he said, 'Stick, stick, now stop!'

Then he took the cloth, which the inn-keeper was only too pleased to give back, put it into his pocket, and went home with his stick in his hand, leading the ram by a cord round its horns. Thus, in the end, he was well paid for the meal which he had lost.

*From Dasent's
'Tales from the Norse.'*

THE WIND'S LANGUAGE.

The wind has a language

I would I could learn :

Sometimes 'tis soothing,

And sometimes 'tis stern ;

Sometimes it comes

Like a low, sweet song,

And all things grow calm

As the sound floats along ;

And the forest is lulled

By the dreamy strain,

And slumber sinks down

On the wandering main ;

And its crystal arms

Are folded in rest,

And the tall ship sleeps

On its heaving breast.

5. CASSIE THE CURIOUS.—I.

Words : performing acrobats stall
 trumpet curious

- Find out :* (1) Which animal did Bob like best in the circus ?
 (2) Why was Cassie always pleased to see Bob ?
 (3) Why was she called 'curious' ?

A big circus had been staying for some weeks in the town where Bob White lived. It was a fine circus, with many performing horses, lions, acrobats, clowns, and two large elephants.

Bob loved the circus, and he went there whenever he could. It was not only the show, as the circus folk called it, that he enjoyed : he liked nothing better than to go into the great tent behind the ring. Here lived the beautiful horses, each in its own stall ; and here, too, lived the elephants, Bongo and Cassie.

Bob soon made friends with the elephants. When their keeper saw that Bob was not afraid of the animals, and that he had no wish to tease them, he was always pleased to allow the boy to wander about the tent.

Bongo, the old elephant, learnt to know Bob

in a very short time ; but it was Cassie, the other elephant, who became his best friend. Cassie was a very gentle, playful beast. She was eleven years old, two years older than Bob, and she weighed, so the keeper said, nearly two tons!

When Bob went into the tent and called to her, she would turn round, raise her head, and trumpet gently. Then, when he went up to her, she would put her trunk first into one of his pockets and then into the other, in search of the small sugary buns which his mother made. You may be sure that there were nearly always a few buns in Bob's pocket for his greatest friend.

Sometimes, to have a game with Cassie, Bob would hide the buns under his jersey or in his school-bag. Yet even tricks of that kind could not put Cassie off. If her trunk could find no buns in his pocket, it rolled up his jersey in search of them. If they were not there, the trunk would swing gently about until it found the school-bag. Then, before you could say '*Bun!*', Cassie would have the bag open and the buns in her mouth.

'There never was a more curious beast!' declared her keeper. 'She pokes that trunk of hers into everything, and she never rests until she has found what she is looking for!'

6. CASSIE THE CURIOUS.—II.

Words : **repairs** **burglars** **secure**
 joiner **wedged** **hide**

- Find out :* (1) What wakened Bob's mother ?
 (2) What did she find in the kitchen ?
 (3) What other word might have been
 used, instead of 'curious,' in the
 heading of this story ?

One day the tent where the animals lived had to be taken down for some repairs. The horses were lodged for the night in some stables in the town. Bongo and Cassie, to Bob's delight, were stabled in a shed in a joiner's yard, next door to Bob's home.

Bob went to say good-night to Cassie, and to take her a bun or two before he went to bed. 'I'll see you in the morning, old lady,' he said, as he reached up to stroke her great ear.

The next morning, before daylight, Bob's mother was awakened by a loud crash downstairs in the kitchen. She sat up in bed and listened. What could it be? Burglars?

Crash! crash! again, louder than the first time. Mrs White and Bob were the only people

in the house, and Bob was asleep. Mrs White was very much afraid, but she felt that she must go and find out what the noise was.

She went softly downstairs and opened the door that led into the kitchen. As she did so, something long and grey waved in her face.

It was an elephant's trunk! The owner of the trunk was standing wedged in the narrow doorway leading into the back garden.

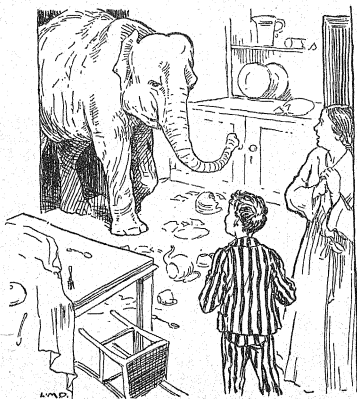
Mrs White ran upstairs again, calling 'Bob! Bob! There's a great beast in the kitchen, and I believe it's your elephant!'

Bob was awake and downstairs in three minutes. Cassie was still in the doorway, trying with her trunk to open a cupboard door, which was locked.

Cups, plates and saucers, which had been set out on the table for the morning's breakfast, were lying in pieces on the floor, for Cassie had pulled off the tablecloth, and had tried to eat half of it. She had also swept jugs and dishes from the dresser on to the floor.

'Oh, Cassie!' cried Bob. 'What are you doing here? Go back at once!'

At the sound of a voice that she knew, Cassie began to back out of the doorway. She did not find it easy to do this, for she was really rather tightly wedged. Still, she freed herself at last.



Then she let Bob take her by the trunk and lead her out of the garden gate.

She had broken the gate open by leaning against it, just as she had broken open the kitchen door and the door of her stable. Chains had bound her feet to the stable floor, but she had snapped them.

Bob led Cassie back into the shed, where she

stayed quietly while he roused her keeper and some more men, who soon made her secure again.

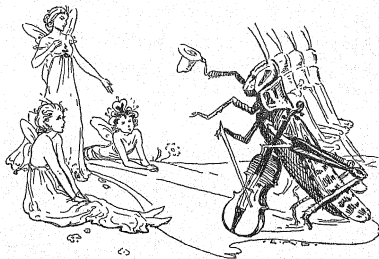
'Didn't I tell you,' the keeper said to Bob later in the day, 'that there never was a more curious beast? She wants to find out all about everything, and that's why she took a trip as far as your kitchen, I suppose.'

'Was that it?' Bob whispered to Cassie, as he leaned against her and patted her thick hide. 'What *did* you come to look for in our kitchen, old lady?'

Cassie lifted her head and gave a soft little trumpet, and Bob was sure that she said, 'Buns, of course! What do *you* think?'

Dorothy King.

A nose like a hose
Has the elephant,
Which he swings from side to side.
A silly small tail
Has the elephant
Too short for a fellow so wide—
Four flat feet
Has the elephant,
And a back that's made to ride.
But riddle-me-ree, I wish I knew
What the elephant thinks of me and you.



7. RILLOBY-RILL.

Grasshoppers four a-fiddling went,
Heigh-ho! never be still!
They earned but little towards their rent,
But all day long with their elbows bent
They fiddled a tune called Rilloby-rilloby,
Fiddled a tune called Rilloby-rill.

Grasshoppers soon on fairies came,
Heigh-ho! never be still!
Fairies asked with a manner of blame,
'Where do you come from? What is your
name?
What do you want with your Rilloby-rilloby,
What do you want with your Rilloby-rill?'

‘Madam, you see before you stand,
 Heigh-ho ! never be still !
 The Old Original Favourite Grand
 Grasshopper’s Green Herbarian Band,
 And the tune we play is Rilloby-rilloby,
 Madam, the tune is Rilloby-rill.’

Fairies hadn’t a word to say,
 Heigh-ho ! never be still !
 Fairies seldom are sweet by day,
 But the Grasshoppers merrily fiddled away,
 Oh, but they played with a willoby-rilloby !
 Oh, but they played with a willoby-will !

Fairies slumber and sulk at noon,
 Heigh-ho ! never be still !
 But at last the kind old motherly moon
 Brought them dew in a silver spoon,
 And they turned to ask for Rilloby-rilloby,
 One more round of Rilloby-rill.

Ah ! but nobody now replied,
 Heigh-ho ! never be still !
 When day went down the music died,
 Grasshoppers four lay side by side,
 And there was an end of their Rilloby-rilloby,
 There was an end of their Rilloby-rill.

Sir Henry Newbolt.

8. THE BOY WHO LOVED MUSIC.—I.

Words : judge attic disturb
 nephew old-fashioned to practise

- Find out :* (1) How did George show his love for music ?
 (2) What did his father think of that love ?
 (3) Where did George wish to go with his father ?

I

More than two hundred and fifty years ago, there lived in a small town in Germany a boy named George Frederick Handel. George's father was a doctor, who was well known for his skill.

'Some day, George, you too will become famous,' said the old Doctor to his son one morning. 'Perhaps you will be a great doctor.'

George shook his head and said, 'I have no wish to be a doctor, Father.'

'Then perhaps you will be a great judge,' said the Doctor.

'I have no wish to be either a judge or a

doctor,' replied the boy. 'I want to give my life to music. I want to be able to play beautiful music, just like those great masters about whom I have heard so much; yes, and some day I want to be able to write music of my own.'

'What nonsense is this, child?' cried the Doctor angrily. 'No son of mine shall waste his time at music. Be off to school! Perhaps your books will drive such folly out of your head!'

So George went off to school, but neither books nor lessons could drive away his great love for music. Often, unknown to his father, he would creep round to the open door of one of the town churches, in order to listen to the playing of the great organ.

'Some day I shall be able to play like that,' the boy would say to himself as he turned to go home.

George had one great friend, his Aunt Anna. She loved her nephew dearly, and knew how much the boy longed to be able to play.

One day Aunt Anna led the boy up to the attic. Opening the door, she showed him a small, old-fashioned kind of piano, called a spinet, which she had secretly hidden there.

'It is a very small one, George,' she said. 'Its sound is not loud, so it will not disturb your



father. If you practise quietly, you will soon learn to play quite well.'

George's eyes sparkled with wonder. 'You dear Aunt Anna!' he cried. 'How can I thank you!'

After that, in the dead of the night, the boy would steal up to the attic, and there, while the family slept in peace below, he would practise his beloved music.

About forty miles from the town where George lived stood the castle of a great Duke. George had often heard of the splendid life at the castle. He had been told, too, about the great players who came to perform before the Duke.

One day Doctor Handel, who happened to be the Duke's doctor, was called to the castle to attend to some person who was ill.

'Good-bye, George, my boy,' he said to George as he walked across the town square to the coach. 'I shall be away for a week or more. See that you work hard at your lessons until I return.'

George looked earnestly at his father. 'Oh Father, please take me with you,' he begged.

'You! What business could you have at the Duke's castle?' asked the Doctor rather taken aback.

'No business, Father,' answered the boy, 'but I have heard about the wonderful life there, and about the beauty of the music.'

'Music! Music! Always music!' exclaimed his father angrily. 'Music will ruin your life, boy! No, you may *not* go with me to the Duke's castle!'



With these words, the Doctor climbed into the waiting coach, which at once set off on its journey.

‘Take me! Oh, please take me!’ cried George, half in tears, and the boy began to run after the coach as it rumbled through the roughly paved streets.

9. THE BOY WHO LOVED MUSIC.—II.

Words : passenger choir-boys
 chapel service

Find out : (1) How did George manage to reach
 the Duke's castle ?
 (2) How did he spend his time there ?
 (3) What promise did the organ-master
 make to him ?

In those days the roads were bad and travelling was slow, so George did not have much difficulty in keeping up with the coach as it rolled on its way.

A few miles from the town one of the passengers noticed the little boy running along some distance behind.

‘Why, Doctor Handel,’ he exclaimed, ‘is that not your little son, George? I believe he is trying to catch up with us.’

At once the driver was ordered to stop the coach, and in a little while George came panting up.

Doctor Handel was in a furious rage. 'How dare you follow the coach, young sir!' he cried. 'You will return to town at once—on your own legs, as you have come!'

'Please, Father, take me with you,' gasped George earnestly.

'Certainly not!' was the angry reply.

'But, good Doctor, you cannot send the boy back now,' said the other passenger. 'He is tired out, and would without a doubt fall by the wayside. Then, perhaps, robbers would get him.'

'Indeed, that punishment is what the young rascal deserves,' declared the Doctor angrily, 'but perhaps he had better come with me.' Then he turned to the boy and said sternly, 'You may come into the coach, and I shall take you with me, though I know not what I shall do with you at the Duke's castle. But remember, one word about music and back you shall go by the next coach.'

So George climbed into the coach, and away they went. It was a happy boy who drove into the courtyard of the Duke's castle that evening.

During his stay at the castle, George was left to amuse himself, while Doctor Handel went about his business. Nothing delighted the boy



'Please, Father, take me with you!'

more than to wander into the castle chapel, where he could hear the organ playing and the choir-boys practising their hymns.

One day the master of the choir-boys spoke to the little stranger. 'Why do you come here so often?' he asked kindly.

'It is because I like to hear you playing the organ and to listen to the boys practising their hymns,' replied George.

'And could *you* play the organ?' asked the master.

'I should like to try, sir, if you please,' was the reply.

'Come, let me hear you, then,' said the master, and he gave George his seat at the organ.

So George sat down. He had practised hard on his spinet at home, and once or twice the organ-master in the church near his home had allowed him to play the church organ. Of course, this great organ in the Duke's chapel felt strange to him, but he managed to play quite a difficult tune.

'Very good, very good indeed, my boy,' said the master when George had finished. 'Tell me, how would you like to play before the Duke?'

'Before the Duke! Oh, sir!' exclaimed

George. 'I—I should try my best to please him.'

'Then you shall play after the service on Sunday,' answered the master.

10. THE BOY WHO LOVED MUSIC.—III.

Words : attendants rashness command

- Find out :*
- (1) What surprise did the Duke get at the end of the Sunday morning service ? ✓
 - (2) What command did the Duke give to George's father ? ✓
 - (3) What happened to George when he grew up ? ✓

Sunday service was over. As the Duke and his attendants rose to leave the chapel, the soft notes of the organ came through the quiet air.

'Our master of the organ plays nobly to-day,' said the Duke, as he stopped to listen. Then he caught sight of the player seated at the

organ, and exclaimed, 'Upon my word, 'tis a child who plays so sweetly! Who may this young master be?'

'Your Highness, he is a son of good Doctor Handel,' answered an attendant. 'I have heard it said that he is a lad of great promise at the organ.'

'There can be no doubt of that,' declared the Duke. 'See that the boy and his father come to my room this afternoon.' And the Duke and his attendants walked slowly out of the chapel.

That afternoon the Doctor and his son were shown into the Duke's room.

At once the Doctor cried out, 'Your Highness, please forgive the boy's rashness. He is but a child, and knew not what he was about. I have scolded him soundly for daring to play the organ before you.'

The Duke laughed heartily and said, 'Then, my dear Doctor, I shall have to scold you for scolding the boy! Never has the organ of my chapel been played so sweetly. Doctor Handel, I have to ask a favour of you.'

'Your Highness, I shall be pleased to give any favour if you will pardon my boy for his rashness.'

'Then will you leave the lad with me, to be

trained in music under the best teachers?' said the Duke.

The Doctor was greatly taken aback. 'Your Highness,' he said, trembling for fear that the Duke might be angry, 'I cannot leave him here. He must go home with me, and work at his books.'

'Then I beg of you to send him to a good master in your own town,' said the Duke.

'Nay, sire, that cannot be either,' said the Doctor. 'It is my wish that he should forget about music. 'Tis but a waste of time.'

'Then I *command* you to have the boy trained in music,' said the Duke sternly. 'Now go!'

The Doctor trembled at the Duke's command, for he knew that he must obey; but George's heart beat fast for joy as he and his father bowed and turned to go.

When they reached the door, the Duke called out, 'My boy, come back. I have something to say to you. Show me your pocket.'

Looking very surprised, George pointed to his pocket. Into it the Duke poured a handful of golden coins, saying, 'Perhaps these will pay for your first lessons.'

'Your Highness!' was all that George could say.



When the Doctor and his son arrived back in their home town, George began to study music under the best teacher that could be found. Before long, we are told, he knew more than his master, and his name became known even at the royal court in Berlin. What a proud day it was for him when he was called to play before the queen !

Some years later, George Handel came to live in England, and there he spent most of his busy life, writing music which has made his name famous for all time.

Near the end of his life he became blind. Even then, however, he did not give up writing music, but found someone to write it down for him. When Handel died, he was buried in Westminster Abbey in London, among the greatest people of our land.

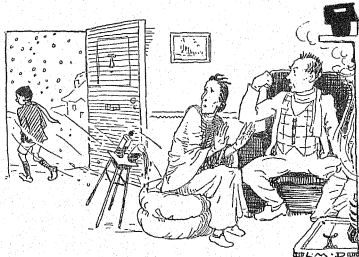
Below you will find the names of some famous pieces of music written by Handel. You may hear them on the wireless; or, if you have a gramophone, you can hear them on the records whose numbers are given after each piece.

Largo (Columbia L 2046).

Water Music (Columbia DX 538-9).

Entrance of the Queen of Sheba (Columbia LX 255).

See the Conquering Hero Comes (Columbia DB 1214).



II. GODFREY GORDON GUSTAVUS GORE.

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore—
No doubt you have heard the name before—
Was a boy who never would shut a door!

The wind might whistle, the wind might roar,
And teeth be aching and throats be sore,
But still he never would shut the door.

His father would beg, his mother implore,
'Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,
We really *do* wish you would shut the door!'

Their hands they wrung, their hair they tore,
But Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore
Was deaf as the buoy out at the Nore.

When he walked forth the folks would roar,
 'Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,
 Why don't you remember to shut the door?'

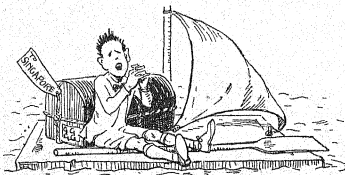
They rigged out a Shutter with sail and oar,
 And threatened to pack off Gustavus Gore
 On a voyage of penance to Singapore.

But he begged for mercy, and said, 'No more!
 Pray do not send me to Singapore
 On a Shutter, and then I will shut the door!'

'You will?' said his parents. 'Then keep on
 shore!

But mind you do! For the plague is sore
 Of a fellow that never will shut the door,
 Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore!'

W. B. Rands.



12. DASU.—I.

Hatu Kotu lived in Tibet, a land of high mountains to the north of India. This story tells of the bravery of his dog, Dasu.

Words: tunic sleek exchange procession

- Find out :*
- (1) How did Hatu Kotu get Dasu ?
 - (2) What did Hatu Kotu's family do for a living ?
 - (3) On what journey did they set out ?

I

Dasu was a tiny, fluffy-haired, black puppy when Hatu Kotu found him. The little creature was lying curled up against his mother, who had died of cold and hunger. Hatu Kotu loved animals dearly, so he picked up the puppy, and put it into the front folds of his long tunic to keep it warm. In return, Dasu feebly tried to lick the boy's hand, and Hatu Kotu was his friend from that moment.

Very carefully the boy carried the puppy home to the camp where his family lived, and there he gave it some warm milk. Soon Dasu was able to stand up on his trembling legs and to wag his curly tail as a sign of thanks.

At first Hatu Kotu hid the puppy, for he was afraid that his parents would not allow him to keep such a weak and starving animal; but when Dasu became fat and sleek, he showed him to his mother.

‘Another dog?’ she said doubtfully. ‘Have we not dogs in plenty with the goat and sheep flocks? Why do you want to bring yet another? It means another mouth to feed, and food is already scarce.’ However, the woman spoke to Hatu Kotu’s father about it, and he, after much grumbling, agreed to let his little son keep the puppy.

‘But he must be trained to the sheep,’ declared the man. ‘We cannot have any useless animals here.’

Hatu Kotu promised to train Dasu, and before long the dog learned to perform his duties very well. Dasu was quite fearless, and would face even Lala, the great ram who led the flocks, though he knew well that Lala had a huge pair of curving horns and a very nasty temper.

2

When the cold weather came, Hatu Kotu’s father gathered his flocks together and loaded them with little skin bags of borax, which is a



kind of salt found in Tibet. They were to carry these bags down to India, where the Tibetans would exchange both the flocks and the borax for food and clothes.

The family's little tents, blackened with smoke, were rolled up and strapped on the backs of a small herd of donkeys. Hatu Kotu's father and mother put on all their clothes, for that was the

easiest way of carrying them, then, with their bundles on their backs, they began to drive the sheep down the steep mountain track. What gruntings, and cries, and shrill whistles, and excited barking of sheep-dogs could be heard, as the party set out upon its long journey to the plains of India!

Some of the narrow tracks which they had to follow went along the edge of great rocky cliffs. Sometimes their path led them over a dashing stream, which they had to cross on a bridge made of a single log of wood. Hatu Kotu and his family were used to such things ; they marched across a swaying log just as if they were crossing a wide bridge, and they did not think very much about it.

One of the men, who could play very sweetly on a flute, used to help them along in their weary marches with quaint little tunes. Besides, the rams carried big deep-toned bells which rang as the animals walked, so there was always plenty of music as the procession made its long journey southward.

13. DASU.—II.

Words : pitched (tents) hobbled pen
 grazed leopard intention

Find out : (1) What wakened Hatu Kotu ?
 (2) What happened to Hatu Kotu ?

Draw : A picture of the family's camp.

At last the little party came to the lower hills, which were covered with trees and grass. There the tracks became wider, and walking was much easier.

One night they camped on a narrow ridge between two valleys. The animals were unloaded, and a round wall was made by building up the bags of borax. In the middle of the circle Hatu Kotu's family pitched their tents, and settled down to cook their evening meal, while the flocks grazed peacefully on the green grass around them.

As soon as it was dark, the sheep were driven into the shelter, and the donkeys were hobbled near by, for the Tibetans knew that if an animal strayed it would almost certainly be carried off by a tiger or a leopard.

Hatu Kotu and his parents were tired after their day's march, so they went to bed early. About midnight Hatu Kotu was awakened by Dasu, who kept pushing his cold nose against the boy's neck.

'What 's the matter, Dasu ? ' he asked sleepily.

The dog was listening eagerly to some sound which seemed to come like an echo from the valley. As Hatu Kotu listened too, he heard the sudden, sharp bark of a deer quite close by.

'It 's nothing, Dasu ; go to sleep,' said Hatu Kotu, lying down again.

Still Dasu was ill at ease : he whimpered and prowled about Hatu Kotu's tent. At last he crawled out of the tent and stood outside, among the munching sheep and goats. They too were uneasy, and the great watch-dog chained across the opening of the sheep pen was standing up and glaring straight into the darkness of the night.

Suddenly, with a heavy crashing of bushes, the striped body of a tiger leapt into the pen and seized a fat lamb. The watch-dog strained at his rope until he broke loose, then he ran for safety. The other dogs set up a frightened howling, but the sheep and goats were silent with terror.

At the sudden noise Hatu Kotu, who was

lying only half asleep, sat up and rubbed his eyes. The boy missed Dasu from his tent, so he ran out to see what had happened. A sound of angry snarling came from the tiger who held the poor lamb under one of his giant paws.

"It is a tiger!" gasped the boy.

Without thinking of what he was about, Hatu Kotu sprang towards the big animal, waving his arms wildly. He hoped to scare it off, but the tiger was old and fierce, and had no intention of being scared away by a small boy.

Then, as Hatu Kotu stopped waving his arms, the tiger's eyes gleamed wickedly. With a quick spring, the great animal threw himself at the little boy, and knocked him flat on the ground. Hatu Kotu gave a loud scream, and the next moment a small furry body flung itself at the tiger's head.



14. DASU.—III.

<i>Words :</i>	despair	recovered
	attention	grudge

- Find out :*
- (1) How did Dasu help in Hatu Kotu's fight with the tiger?
 - (2) How was Hatu Kotu saved?
 - (3) What was the fate of Dasu?

It was Dasu ! Whenever the tiger tried to lower its great snarling mouth to seize Hatu Kotu, Dasu was in the way. His small sharp teeth dug into the tiger's head and neck, and made the fierce animal still more angry. With a roar he flung the little dog into the air, but in a moment or two Dasu returned to the attack.

Hatu Kotu dared not rise and run, so he buried his face in the ground. The minutes seemed like years to the little boy. He knew that Dasu could not help him much longer, for the dog's soft little body was already covered with bites and deep scratches. Oh, why did someone not come to his aid?

At last Hatu Kotu's mother awoke, and in a moment she roused the rest of the family.



Shouting loudly, they attacked the tiger with heavy sticks, then in despair Hatu Kotu's mother threw a lighted torch at it. The flames of the torch and the noise of the shouting frightened the tiger ; it leapt sulkily down the valley and was gone.

Hatu Kotu was not badly hurt, though he was bruised and had a few cuts where the tiger had bitten his shoulder ; but poor Dasu, whom they found hiding in a corner, was badly wounded. Hatu Kotu's mother bound up the boy's cuts with a piece of dirty rag, and placed a lump of salt against the sore places ; but they all shook their heads over Dasu.

'I fear we are going to lose Dasu. Indeed, he is as good as dead already,' said Hatu Kotu's father, as he went to light a great fire and to mend the broken places in the pen. Hatu Kotu wept and cried and begged until his mother and one of the men picked up the dog and washed his wounds.

After many days of careful attention Dasu recovered, though he was never as strong and as swift of foot as before. He was Hatu Kotu's shadow more than ever now, and followed the boy everywhere.

Sometimes other Tibetans who came to the camp would laugh and say, 'Why do you keep

that crippled old sheep-dog? We could give you plenty of puppies which would be of more use to you and would eat less than that lazy animal.'

To these people Hatu Kotu's father would reply, 'We grudge Dasu nothing. He saved my little boy's life, and he is our best friend.'

Evelyn Powell-Price.



O, I will be a traveller,
And roam to far Tibet,
Across great streams as deep as dreams
And valleys black as jet;
'Neath mountains high that cleave the sky
I'll weave my way.—And yet,
How can I? I'm no traveller,
And this is not Tibet.

15. PREPARING FOR WINTER.—I.

Words : **twilight** **venture** **shed**
 hobbies **adorn** **furled**

- Find out :* (1) What changes do we make in our lives when winter comes?
(2) How do the dandelion and the shepherd's purse pass the winter?
(3) How do most trees prepare for winter?

The short days of October remind us that summer is long past, and that autumn too is coming to an end. Although it is pleasant to think of the bright days and splendid twilights of summer, many of us look forward to the long, dark evenings that are before us.

How are we to spend them? Most of us do not find the question difficult to answer. We shall have more time for reading, for listening to the wireless, and for following our favourite hobbies. Of course, *all* our spare time will not be spent indoors, but when we venture out we shall have to wear overcoats and other thick clothing, which we could not have worn in the heat of summer.

Indeed, we make quite a change in our lives as winter comes on. We should remember that we are not the only creatures to do so. Many animals and most plants prepare for the dull, cold days of winter even more carefully than we do.

Have you ever wondered what happens in winter to the many hundreds of plants whose flowers adorn our gardens and meadows during the summer months? When they have shed their last flowers, most of them wither away, and we often say that they are dead. That is not quite true, however, for beneath the ground the roots of many of them lie as if asleep, ready to spring up again when the bleak days are past. The daisy, the dandelion, and the violet are among the plants which pass the winter in this way.

Many plants, such as the poppy, the shepherd's purse, and the sweet pea, do really die when summer goes, but they have taken care to provide seed from which new plants of their kind may spring in the next season. Often the seed is scattered widely by wind or by other means.

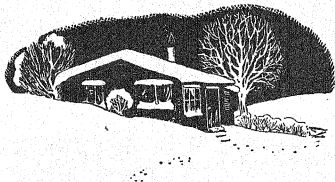
Most trees prepare for winter by allowing their leaves to fall, before the season of storms comes upon them. During the long summer sunshine the leaves have been busy making food

for the tree, but in autumn the tree begins to use up the food stored in them. Each leaf is



then sealed with a tiny layer of cork, and gradually it turns to the yellow or golden-brown colour which makes our woods so beautiful in that season. Then, when winter comes, or even sooner, the leaves drop off or are scattered by the wind.

Through the months of snows and frosts and gales the trees stand with branches bare and cold, like great ships that have furled their sails in the face of the storm, and are resting until the fair weather comes again.

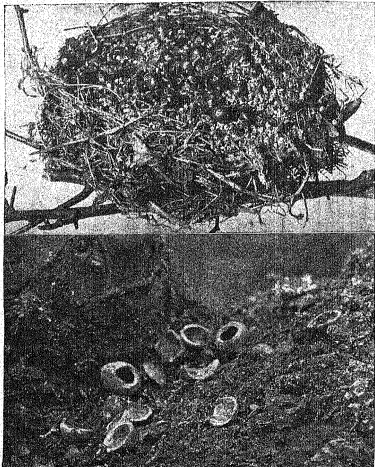


16. PREPARING FOR WINTER.—II.

Words : brave scarcity alight
 fast cocoons rigging

- Find out :* (1) How do the hedgehog and the squirrel prepare for winter?
 (2) What are some of the wonderful facts about migrating birds?

Let us see how animals and birds prepare for winter. Many of them brave the storms of winter as well as they can, taking shelter in the worst weather and making the best of the fine days. Indeed, many of the creatures of the wild become quite tame at that season, for the search for food brings them much nearer human dwellings than they care to come in summer, when food is to be found in plenty.



Boslin.

WINTER LARDERS

Top Picture.—A field-mouse's winter store of nuts, fruits, grains, and other 'dainties.' The 'larder' is an old bird's-nest.

Bottom Picture.—The remains of a squirrel's Christmas dinner. The animal has dug up nuts hidden in the autumn, and has feasted well !

Other animals decide that the best way of passing the dreary season is to lie in a kind of deep sleep in some out-of-the-way corner. This plan is followed by the hedgehog, who prepares himself for his long winter fast by growing a 'coat' of fat just beneath his skin.

The bat, dormouse, and squirrel are other animals which like to dream the winter away, though they may peep out on fine days. The squirrel, indeed, is quite well prepared for winter, for not only does he have his tail at its bushiest and warmest then, but in autumn he lays by stores of nuts which he can use for food in time of scarcity.

When winter comes upon us, we might well ask what has happened to the insects which were with us in so great numbers only a few months ago. We know, of course, that most of the honey-bees are resting snugly in their well-made hives, while now and again, we may disturb a queen wasp or a butterfly as she slumbers in some out-of-the-way corner. Most insects, however, are dead, for their life is a short one; but they have left eggs or grubs or cocoons from which new insects will come in spring, when life begins afresh upon the earth.

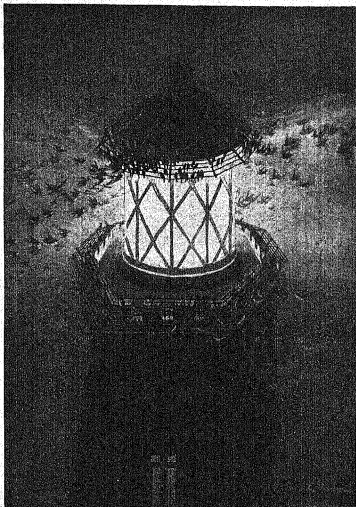
Perhaps the wisest and luckiest creatures of all are those birds which do not spend winter

in the mists and snows of the north, but take flight to the warm countries of the south. The swallow, cuckoo, and nightingale are the best known of these *migrating birds*, as they are called. Perhaps you can think of some others.

Where do these birds go? A great many of them fly south to Africa, some going overland across the south of Europe, while others prefer to take a straighter course over the sea.

The long journey is often full of great danger to the little feathered travellers, for storms may arise and the weaker birds may not be able to keep up with the stronger. Quite often a migrating bird, in search of a rest, may alight on the rigging of a ship far out at sea, and cling to the rope, more dead than alive. Many birds, too, seek rest on some lonely lighthouse; sometimes, attracted by the bright light, they even dash themselves to death against the glass of the lighthouse.

There are many secrets in the story of bird migration. Why do some birds leave us, while others are content to brave the snows of winter? Again, how do migrating birds find their way over trackless miles of unknown land and sea, and then, in springtime, find their way back again? Often the birds return to the spot which they left in the autumn; swallows, for



From the painting by G. Bron.

By permission.

MIGRATING BIRDS AT ST. CATHERINE'S LIGHTHOUSE

Perches have been built round the lantern so that birds, attracted by the gleam, may rest during their long flight.

example, may come back to the nest which they left the year before. And then, as if to make their task as difficult as possible, migrating birds very often prefer to fly through the darkness of the night. How do they find their way? We do not know, for this is one of the many riddles in the great world of Nature.



THE SWALLOW.

Fly away, fly away
 over the sea,
 Sun-loving swallow,
 for summer is done ;
 Come again, come again,
 come back to me,
 Bringing the summer
 and bringing the sun.

Christina Rossetti.

17. HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

The Indians of North America have many tales about a hero named Hiawatha, who, they say, once lived among them. The following verses, which are part of a long poem, tell about Hiawatha's childhood days. The boy lived in the wigwam of Nokomis, his grandmother, for his mother was dead.

Words : **brakes** **warrior** **beaver**
 flecks **prairie** **lodges**

Find out : (1) What did Nokomis tell Hiawatha
 about the rainbow?
 (2) What were 'Hiawatha's Chickens'
 and 'Hiawatha's Brothers'?

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha,
Heard the whispering of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the water,
Sounds of music, words of wonder ;
'Minne-wawa !' said the pine-trees,
'Mudway-aushka !' said the water.

Saw the fire-fly, Wah-wah-taysee,
Flitting through the dusk of evening,
With the twinkle of its candle
Lighting up the brakes and bushes ;

And he sang the song of children,
Sang the song Nokomis taught him :
'Wah-wah-taysee, little fire-fly,
Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids !'

Saw the moon rise from the water,
Rippling, rounding from the water,
Saw the flecks and shadows on it,
Whispered, 'What is that, Nokomis ?'
And the good Nokomis answered :
'Once a warrior, very angry,
Seized his grandmother, and threw her
Up into the sky at midnight ;
Right against the moon he threw her ;
'Tis her body that you see there.'

Saw the rainbow in the heaven,
In the eastern sky the rainbow,
Whispered, 'What is that, Nokomis ?'
And the good Nokomis answered :
''Tis the heaven of flowers you see there
All the wild-flowers of the forest,
All the lilies of the prairie,
When on earth they fade and perish,
Blossom in that heaven above us.'

When he heard the owls at midnight,
Hooting, laughing in the forest,
'What is that?' he cried, in terror;
'What is that,' he said, 'Nokomis?'
And the good Nokomis answered:
'That is but the owl and owlet,
Talking in their native language,
Talking, scolding at each other.'

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them 'Hiawatha's Chickens.'

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them 'Hiawatha's Brothers.'

H. W. Longfellow.

18. THE CRATCHITS' CHRISTMAS.—I.

This little story, which tells how Bob Cratchit and his family spent Christmas, is part of a book called *A Christmas Carol*. It was written about a hundred years ago by a famous author, Charles Dickens, whose name you may have heard.

Words : **Christian name** **limb** **copper**
 threadbare **supported** **simmer**

Find out : (1) Why were the Cratchits so excited ?
 (2) Who was Tiny Tim ? Where had he been ?

Draw : A plan of the Cratchits' dinner-table, filling in the name of each person where you think he or she would sit. (Use the letter X for any whose names you do not know.)

I

Bob Cratchit, who was a clerk, had only fifteen 'bob' a week ; he pocketed on Saturdays only fifteen copies of his Christian name. Yet Christmas blessed his humble house.

Up rose Mrs Cratchit, gay in ribbons, which

are cheap and make a good show for sixpence. She laid the cloth, helped by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also gay in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes.

And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and had known it for their own. These young Cratchits danced about the table, and Master Peter blew the fire, until the slow potatoes, bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan-lid to be let out and peeled.

'What ever has got your father, then?' said Mrs Cratchit, 'and your brother, Tiny Tim! And Martha wasn't as late last Christmas Day!'

'Here's Martha, Mother!' said a girl, coming in as she spoke.

'Here's Martha, Mother!' cried the two young Cratchits. 'Hurrah! There's *such* a goose, Martha!'

'Why, bless your heart, my dear, how late you are!' said Mrs Cratchit, kissing Martha a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her. 'Well! Never mind so long as you have come. Sit down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm.'

'No, no! There's father coming,' cried the



two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. 'Hide, Martha, hide!'

So Martha hid herself, and in came Bob Cratchit, the father, with his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim! He bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame.

'Why, where's our Martha?' cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

'Not coming,' said Mrs Cratchit.

'Not coming!' said Bob. 'Not coming, upon Christmas Day!'

Martha didn't like to see her father sad, if it were only in joke, so she came out from behind the door, and ran into his arms. Meanwhile the two young Cratchits bore Tiny Tim off into the wash-house, so that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

2

'And how did little Tim behave?' asked Mrs Cratchit, when Bob had hugged his daughter to his heart's content.

'As good as gold,' said Bob, 'and better. Somehow, he thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember, upon Christmas Day, Who made lame beggars walk and blind men see.'

Bob's voice trembled when he told them this, and trembled more when he said that Tiny Tim was growing strong and hearty. Then Tim's active little crutch was heard upon the floor, and back he came to his stool before the fire.

Bob, turning up his cuffs, made some hot mixture in a jug with lemons, and stirred it round and round, and put it on the hob to simmer. Master Peter and the two young

Cratchits went to fetch the goose, with which they soon returned in a procession.

Such a bustle followed that you might have thought a goose the rarest of all birds. And in truth it was something very like it in that house. Mrs Cratchit made the gravy hissing hot ; Master Peter mashed the potatoes ; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce.

Martha dusted the hot plates ; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table ; and the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves. Then they crammed spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped.

At last the dishes were set out, and grace was said. It was followed by a breathless pause, as Mrs Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving-knife, prepared to plunge it in the breast of the goose. When she did so, and the long-expected gush of stuffing came forth, one murmur of delight arose all round the board. Even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried, ' Hurrah ! '

19. THE CRATCHITS' CHRISTMAS.—II.

Words : **tenderness** **sage** **echoed**
 flavour **goblets** **apprentice**

Find out :

- (1) What fears did Mrs Cratchit have as she went for the pudding?
- (2) What did the Cratchit family do after their Christmas dinner?

I

There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavour, size and cheapness, were admired by all. Helped out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a dinner enough for the whole family. Indeed, as Mrs Cratchit said with great delight, as she looked at one small piece of a bone upon the dish, they hadn't eaten it all. Yet every one had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits were steeped in sage and onions to the eyebrows !

Next, when the plates had been changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs Cratchit left the room alone, to bring the pudding in.



Suppose it should not be done enough ! Suppose it should break in turning out ! Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the back-yard and stolen it, while they were merry with the goose ! All sorts of horrors were supposed.

Hallo ! A great deal of steam ! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing-day ! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating-house and a pastry-cook's next door to each other, with a laundry next door to that ! That was the pudding !

In half a minute Mrs Cratchit entered, smiling proudly ; she was carrying the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in brandy, and adorned with Christmas holly stuck into the top.

Oh, a wonderful pudding ! Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought that it was at all a small pudding for a large family.

At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The mixture in the jug was tasted, and said to be perfect ; apples and oranges

were put upon the table, and a shovel of chestnuts on the fire.

Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth ; and at Bob Cratchit's elbow stood all the glasses that the family owned—two tumblers, and a custard cup without a handle. These held the hot mixture from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done. Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily.

Then Bob cried out, ' A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us ! '

And all the family echoed his greeting.

' God bless us, every one ! ' said Tiny Tim, the last of all. He sat very close to his father's side upon his little stool, and Bob held his little hand in his.

And now they were ten times merrier than before. Bob Cratchit told them how he had found work for Master Peter, which would bring in quite five-and-sixpence weekly. The two young Cratchits laughed loudly when they thought of Peter as a working man ; and Peter himself looked thoughtfully at the fire.

Martha, who was a poor apprentice at a dress-maker's shop, then told them what kind of work she had to do, and how many hours she

worked at a stretch, and how she meant to lie abed to-morrow morning for a good long rest, for to-morrow would be a holiday which she was to spend at home.

All this time the chestnuts and the jug were passed round. And by and by they had, from Tiny Tim, a song about a lost child travelling in the snow. Tiny Tim had a sad but sweet little voice, and sang very well indeed.

There was nothing grand in all this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well-dressed; their shoes were very far from being waterproof; their clothes were scanty. Yet they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time.



20. MY NEIGHBOURS.

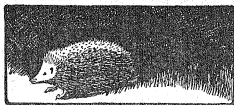
The writer of this story lives, all the year round, in a small hut far from the busy town. He tells about some of his 'neighbours,' who prevent his life from becoming a lonely one.

Words: **armour** **permission** **songster**
 hedgerow **guardian** **solo**

- Find out :* (1) Who are the writer's bold neighbours? Why does he think them bold?
- (2) Who is his dearest neighbour? How did he get to know her?
- (3) How did he meet the field-mouse?

I

Although my hut is among the fields I have many neighbours to keep me company. They are mostly very small neighbours, but what a number of them there are! I have neighbours in feathery dresses, neighbours in furry suits, and neighbours in shining armour. I have neighbours with two legs, and neighbours with four legs, and neighbours with no legs at all. There are shy little neighbours, who hide in the



bushes and long grass until I have passed ; and there are bold ones, who run off with my dinner when I am not looking. There are neighbours who pick their way daintily along the hedge-row ; and there are neighbours who bump into me as they go clumsily about their business.

Yes, what a crowd of neighbours I have living all round my hut, and above my hut, and underneath my hut, and even *in* my hut ! For they never ask my permission, these small people. Oh, no ! Old Hedgehog found under my hut a cosy corner in which to spend the winter, so he moved in, and there he stayed. Once I gave him a gentle poke to warn him that he had not asked permission, but he grunted to let me know how rude he thought me for disturbing his sleep. So I *had* to leave him !

To tell the truth, my neighbours do as they please with me. Once I had been away from my hut for a few weeks in the early part of the year. When I returned I started lighting my fire, for the weather was rather cold. As I

came near my stove I heard a scuffling in the chimney. I ran outside and looked up, and was just in time to see two starlings fly out from the chimney-top.

Now what do *you* think of that? They had made their nest in my one and only chimney, and I had to do without a fire till the family hatched out and flew away. So I sat shivering over an old oil-stove that gave off no heat at all; and while I shivered I could hear the Starling family having great times in their cosy, sheltered home.

Although I count Hedgehog and the Starling family among my bold neighbours, I love them too. Hedgehog is a quiet and rather shy old fellow, and the Starlings cheer me with welcome songs during winter when most other birds are silent. Still, the way in which they behaved to me was not very polite, was it?

2

The dearest of my hut neighbours is Jenny Wren, who is the smallest of my feathered companions. I love her because she trusts me and, I think, even looks on me as her guardian. Certainly I would protect her against anyone or anything cruel enough to wish her

harm ; but nobody, surely, would think of harming a little wren.

I knew I had Jenny Wren for a neighbour long before I ever saw her, for I often heard her cheery song coming from the thick hawthorn hedge that runs past the front door of my hut. This hedge is so thick, however, that I could never catch sight of the tiny songster.

Then one bright morning, as I sat at breakfast with the door wide open, she paid me a visit. Leaving the hawthorn, she flew over and perched on the door-handle. From there she sang another line or two, as if she were saying, 'How do you do ; isn't the weather beautiful this morning ?'

I said, 'Good-morning, Miss Wren,' and went on eating, which was not very polite of me. From the door-handle Jenny Wren flew into the hut and perched on the book-case, and from there she again gave me a short but lively solo. She was not at all afraid, and hopped from book-case to chair, and from chair to picture, until at last she arrived on the table among my breakfast dishes. I had a happy quarter-hour with my trusting visitor, and when she at last flew out again, I remembered my manners and, going to the door, invited her to return whenever she could.

Ever since that day Jenny Wren has been one of my dearest neighbours. If she is not on my bedroom window-sill to welcome me when I wake in the morning, she never fails to greet me from her hawthorn hedge as I go down to the stream to wash.

3

I am going to tell you now about the lucky meeting I had with another of my neighbours ; this time it was one of the smallest of the furry-coats. It was during that time when the Starling family forced me to sit and shiver so long. As I told you, I had been away for a few weeks, so I returned with a great number of parcels, full of food and other things. I was busy storing them away in tins and cupboards when, from a large bread-tin, I heard the tiniest of soft scratchings. I carefully raised the lid, wondering what would jump out, and there, huddled away in a corner, was a sad little bundle of red-brown fur. It was Field-mouse, one of my timid neighbours.

Field-mouse is one of the small folk who usually hide in the long grass until I have passed, but as I had been away so long, he thought it quite safe to slip in and see what he could find to eat. The bread-tin could not

have been properly closed, and the silly little fellow had either jumped or tumbled down among the bread crumbs that lay at the bottom of it. No doubt he enjoyed himself while the crumbs lasted, but when they were finished he found himself in trouble, for he could not climb up the slippery sides of the tin again!

How long the poor animal had remained in that prison I cannot tell you, but when I lifted him out, he nestled shivering in my hand and made no effort to run away. From my store of food I took a tea-biscuit and crumbled a little in my hand. It was quite sad to see how eagerly the poor creature ate it. He was too hungry to have any fear of me, and I crumbled piece after piece till that little mite, hardly larger than a thimble, had eaten nearly the whole biscuit! Where he put it all, I don't know!

When he had quite finished his meal, I took him out to the hedge, among the roots of which I have often seen his brothers and sisters, and laid him gently down. He sniffed my hand for a second or two, and I could feel his long whiskers tickling my fingers; then with a lively flick of his tail he disappeared among the grasses and ferns that grow under the hedge.

What a blessing that I arrived when I did

to save the life of that little furry-coated goblin of the hedge ! And how beautifully he thanked me by tickling my hand with his snuffling nose and whiskers !

4

My dog Mowgli, like all dogs, is very interested in rabbits. One day, as we were passing a huge sandy burrow, he saw a black baby rabbit sitting sunning itself at the entrance. I don't think Mowgli had ever seen a black rabbit before, for he stood stock-still and stared. I stopped too, and watched them. Black Rabbit did not move, and I think Mowgli had decided that it must be a toy and not really alive.

I don't know whether it heard its mother calling, or it thought of giving Mowgli a surprise, but, frisking its tail, that little rabbit gave one leap and disappeared down the burrow.

Mowgli was taken completely by surprise. He gave one terrified yelp and tore away across the field as fast as his short legs would carry him ! If my ears had been better I'm sure I should have heard the rabbit family laughing downstairs, for the little black baby certainly enjoyed the joke !

From 'The Hut-man's Book'
by G. D. Fisher.

21. IF I WERE LORD OF TARTARY.

Tartary is a land in the south of Asia ; but you need not trouble to look for it on the map, because the writer of this poem simply uses it as another name for the 'Land of Dreams.'

If I were Lord of Tartary,
Myself and me alone,
My bed should be of ivory,
Of beaten gold my throne ;
And in my courts should peacocks flaunt,
And in my forests tigers haunt,
And in my pools great fishes slant
Their fins athwart the sun.

If I were Lord of Tartary,
Trumpeters every day
To every meal should summon me
And in my courtyard bray ;
And in the evening lamps would shine,
Yellow as honey, red as wine,
While harp, and flute, and mandoline
Made music sweet and gay.

If I were Lord of Tartary,
I'd wear a robe of beads,
White, and gold, and green they'd be—
And clustered thick as seeds ;

And ere should wane the morning star
I'd don my robe and scimitar,
And zebras seven should draw my car
Through Tartary's dark glades.

Lord of the fruits of Tartary,

Her rivers silver-pale !

Lord of the hills of Tartary,

Glen, thicket, wood, and dale !

Her flashing stars, her scented breeze,

Her trembling lakes, like foamless seas,

Her bird-delighting citron-trees

In every purple vale !

Walter de la Mare.

DREAMS.

Beyond, beyond the mountain line,

The grey-stone and the boulder,

Beyond the growth of dark green pine,

That crowns its western shoulder,

There lies that fairy-land of mine,

Unseen of a beholder.

Its fruits are all like rubies rare,

Its streams are clear as glasses ;

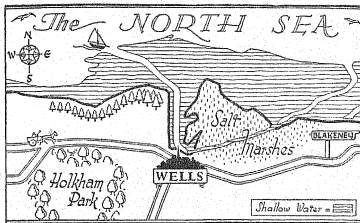
There golden castles hang in air,

And purple grapes in masses,

And noble knights and ladies fair

Come riding down the passes.

C. F. Alexander.



22. A SQUIRREL STORY.

Words : marsh current quay
 creek hailed hermit

Find out : (1) In what difficulty did the squirrel find himself?
 (2) How did he escape?
 (3) How did the squirrel's adventure end?

I

Wells, in Norfolk, lies at the edge of a marsh, a mile and a quarter back from the sea. It has for a harbour a creek which, at full tide, is deep enough to allow small vessels to come up to the town

Near the mouth of the creek is a row of tall guiding-poles in the water. One afternoon, a fisherman noticed a squirrel sitting bunched up on the top of the most distant pole, about thirty feet above the water. The little animal had come through the pine wood on the sand-hills on the west side of the creek ; then, wishing to continue his travels eastward along the shore and over towards Blakeney, he had cast himself into the water. Finding the current too strong, he had just saved himself from being carried out to sea by climbing up the last pole.

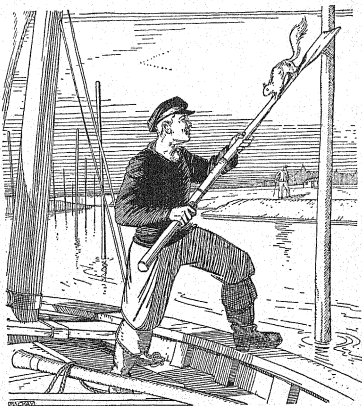
Now the current was the other way, and the creek was full from bank to bank, so the poor squirrel on his pole-top was in the middle of the swirling waters.

The fisherman went home to his tea ; but two hours later, just about sunset, he strolled back to the sea-front, and there still sat the squirrel, bunched up on the top of his pole. Presently a fishing-boat, in which was a young man, came in from the sea. The fisherman hailed the young man, and called his attention to the squirrel on the pole.

‘ All right ; I see him ! ’ the boatman shouted back. ‘ I ’ll try to get him off ! ’

Then, as the swirling current carried the boat up to within about three yards of the pole, the

A SQUIRREL STORY



young man leaned forward and thrust out an oar, until the blade touched the pole. No sooner had it touched than down, like lightning, came the squirrel from his perch. He leaped upon the oar, and from the oar to the boat, then quickly bounded up the mast and perched himself on the top.

The boat went swiftly on, driven by the rushing tide, until it reached the quay at Wells. No sooner did the keel touch the stones at the landing-stage than down the squirrel flew from the mast-top. Rushing to the bow, the little creature took a flying leap to the land, then dashed off towards the town at topmost speed.

A number of children playing on the quay saw him, and with a wild cry of 'Squirrel! Squirrel!' went after him. Luckily there was no dog about; and the squirrel, being faster than the boys, kept well ahead. He dodged this way and that among coal-trucks, wagons, horses, and men busy in unloading boats; then, crossing the coast road, he dashed into one of the narrow streets which run up to the higher part of the town. There more yelling children joined the hunt, and the people of the street ran out of their houses to find out what all the uproar was about.

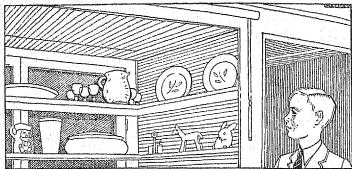
Facing the top of the street is a long brick wall ten feet high. Up this wall went the squirrel without a pause or slip, as swiftly as when going over the level earth. He disappeared over the top into the orchard on the other side, where the loud advancing wave of children was kept back by a cliff.

It had been a breathless chase, and the squirrel could now have settled safely down in that sheltered spot among the fruit trees, for the owner, who lived like a hermit in the house, was friendly to all wild creatures, and allowed neither dogs nor cats nor boys with loud halloo and brutal noise to enter his grounds.

Yet this would not have suited the squirrel. The town noises and lights and the shrill cries of children at play in the evening would have kept him in a constant state of fear, for squirrels are timid creatures. When the town was asleep and silent that night, he climbed the back-wall and crossed other orchards and gardens until he came out to the old unkept hedge on that side, and followed it all the way to Holkham Park, with its many noble trees, in one of which, perhaps, he was born.

And there, at home once more, he no doubt decided, like the Discontented Squirrel of the fable, never again to try to better himself by migrating.

W. H. Hudson.



23. THE GLASS JUG'S STORY.—I

Words : **furnace** **liquid**

- Find out :*
- (1) What story did the Glass Jug offer to tell?
 - (2) What was in the mixture from which the Glass Jug was made?
 - (3) What was the first step in the making of the Jug?

I

‘Hullo! I say, there!’

I was passing a shop window and felt sure that I heard these words. They seemed to come from the window, but as I could see nothing there except glass jugs and vases and such things, I began to walk on. Then the voice spoke again.

‘Do stop, please,’ it said. ‘Everybody passes by, and we are so lonely.’

I looked, but still I saw nobody.

‘I am the glass jug in the corner of the window,’ the voice began again. I looked towards the corner, and there, sure enough, was a pretty glass jug standing among six glasses. As I stared at the jug, which sparkled gaily in a stray gleam of sunshine, it began to speak once more.

✓ ‘This is my family of glasses,’ said the Glass Jug. ‘Five fine healthy boys they are. Just listen to their names : Tang, Teng, Ting, Tong, and Tung. The sixth is called Tyg ; he has a nasty crack in his side, but the shopkeeper doesn’t know about it yet.’

‘How long have you been here?’ I asked politely.

‘Three months—ever since we were born,’ replied the Jug.

‘Born?’ I said. ‘Are glass jugs *born*?’

‘Of course they are,’ said the Jug. ‘We were born in the glass-works. Shall I tell you how we were made?’

‘Please do,’ I said.

The Jug gave a ringing cough, and so did the glasses, and then began its story.

‘A year ago we were all in the earth. Part of us was sand—very fine, white sand; part of us was a white powder called potash; and part of us was a brick-red powder called red lead.

‘It was in the glass-works that the three parts first met. There they were mixed together, just as your mother mixes flour with other things to make a pudding. A lot of broken glass was put in the mixture too; your mother does not put *that* in her puddings!’

‘I hope not!’ I said with a smile.

‘Well,’ the Jug continued its story, ‘the mixture was emptied into a kind of large clay pot. If you visit the glass-works where I was born you will see eight of these pots set in a ring round a very hot furnace.

‘Oh dear, it *was* hot in there! Indeed, it was so hot that the sand and the broken glass and the other things in my mixture all melted together into a liquid as red as fire and about as thick as syrup.’

‘Fancy sand melting!’ I exclaimed.

‘Yes,’ answered the Jug. ‘I would have given anything for a drink of boiling water to cool me in there.’

'Boiling water to cool you!' I exclaimed, thinking that the Jug had made a mistake.

'Yes, boiling water,' replied the Jug. 'If you had been in a furnace which was thirteen times as hot as boiling water, you would have been glad for a cool drink of boiling water too. But I must continue my story. Next, a man poked a long iron pipe, like a big pea-shooter, through the little door of the pot and dipped it into the melted glass. When he took the blow-pipe, as he called it, out again, a ball of melted glass, glowing like a light of a Christmas Tree, was sticking to the end of it. That ball of melted glass was——'

'You!' I said.

'Right!' replied the Jug. 'At any rate, it was the beginning of me as a glass jug.'

At that moment the shopkeeper appeared at the back of the window, lifted another glass jug, and disappeared once more.

'Oh dear,' sighed my Glass Jug friend. 'It's always the same. Nobody seems to want us. I am sure I shall crack with despair one day.'

With these words, the Glass Jug became silent, and it was some time before it spoke again.

24. THE GLASS JUG'S STORY.—II.

Words : rescued grindstone acid

Find out : (1) Why did the Glass Jug complain of being giddy?

(2) Why was it put into the gas-oven?

(3) How was its pattern made?

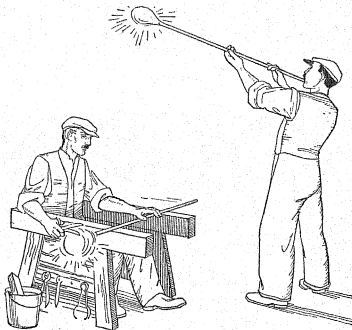
I

How that man worked and worked with me!' said the Glass Jug, when it had decided to continue its story. 'He kept rolling the blow-pipe this way and that between his hands, and as I was stuck on the end of it, I kept turning too. Then, what do you think?—he put his mouth to the other end of the blow-pipe and blew me up like a small balloon. Next he rolled me this way and that way on a smooth iron table, then blew me up a little more, then rolled me again. Oh dear! I was quite giddy by this time!'

'You poor Glass Jug!' I said in pity.

'Yes, but worse was to follow,' said the Jug. 'When I began to feel just a little cooler, what did the cruel man do but push me back into the heat of the furnace again!'

'It was another man who rescued me from



there, but alas ! he was no kinder than the first. He sat down on a queer sort of chair, with long arms, and rolled and turned me until I was as giddy as ever. Of course I was quite soft, and he was able to shape me easily with his tools. He cut me with strong scissors and smoothed me with a piece of wet wood ; he made me narrow in one part and wide in another, and gave me a brim with a lip. After I had been heated again, my glass handle was stuck on, and there I was—a beautiful, clear, glass jug.’

'I'm sure you were thankful that your troubles were over,' I said.

The Glass Jug looked at me closely with his shining eyes. 'My troubles were not over,' he said. 'A boy put me into a long gas-oven with hundreds of other jugs and glasses. Very slowly we moved along that oven, from the hot end to the cool end, and then we were taken out. You see, we had to cool slowly so that we should harden properly; for it is unwise for a glass jug, just as it is unwise for a boy or girl, to go quickly from a very hot place to the cool air.'

'Although I was now a glass jug, I had none of the beautiful patterns which you see on me. These patterns were cut into me by other men who held me against different kinds of little grindstones. I could not help admiring the skill of the men who cut the patterns in me, even although they hurt me dreadfully.

'To end it all, I was dipped in a bath of acid. How I enjoyed that bath! When I was lifted out, I was sparkling like a polished diamond.'

'What happened next?' I asked.

No reply came, so I looked once more into the

window. The Glass Jug was no longer there ; its 'family,' too, was gone !

In a few moments a man left the shop, carrying a large parcel. As he passed, I am certain that I heard a voice, from inside the parcel, saying, 'Hurrah, someone has bought us at last ! Good-bye ; and thank you for listening to my story.' Then came, in clear, ringing tones, 'Tang,' 'Teng,' 'Ting,' 'Tong,' 'Tung' ; but I listened in vain for 'Tyg.'



25. THE BISHOP'S DREAM.—I.

Words : **bishop** **timber** **yoked**
 cathedral **sculptors** **straining**

Find out : (1) Which of these words tells most nearly what kind of man the Bishop was ?

holy proud wicked
humble greedy hard-working

(2) What did the angel show to the Bishop in his dream ?

Some hundreds of years ago there lived a Bishop named Evrard, who built a great cathedral in a city on a hill. The cathedral was a very beautiful one, with wide carved doorways, lovely windows of coloured glass, and splendid towers.

As he looked at the stately building while it was being made, the Bishop said to himself, 'Surely God has no more beautiful house in all the world than this, and I, Bishop Evrard, have built it. It is my work, for I have planned it all—the towers and the windows, the carving and the statues.

'With my riches I have bought the stone



and the timber of which it is made. My gold pays the builders, the carvers, and the sculptors who work upon it. In raising this wonderful church I am doing a noble service to God and to my fellow-men.'

Over the great doorway of the cathedral was a place where a statue might stand. The Bishop meant to fill this place with a stone image of himself.

'It must be only a small, simple statue,' said he, 'for I am not a proud man.' Yet, as he looked up at the empty place, it pleased him

to think that, hundreds of years after he was dead, people would stop before his statue and praise him for what he had done. Thus, though he did not know it, his heart became full of pride.

One night Bishop Evrard had a dream. He thought that a shining angel stood beside his bed, and told him to rise. 'Come,' said the angel. 'I will show you some of those who have worked with you in building the church. They are humble, but in God's sight their work has been worth more than yours.'

The angel led Evrard past the cathedral, and down the steep streets of the old city. Though it was mid-day, the people going to and fro did not seem to see them.

Beyond the city gates they followed a road that led them down till they came to flat, green fields. There, in the middle of the road, they saw two big white oxen yoked to a square block of stone. The great beasts were resting before they began to drag the stone up the steep hill to the cathedral.

'Look!' said the angel. Then the Bishop saw a little ill-clad girl run out from a poor hut near the place where the oxen were standing. She had a bundle of hay in her arms. Going up to the oxen, she gave a handful of

hay first to one and then to the other. Then she stroked their black noses, and laid her rosy face against their white cheeks.

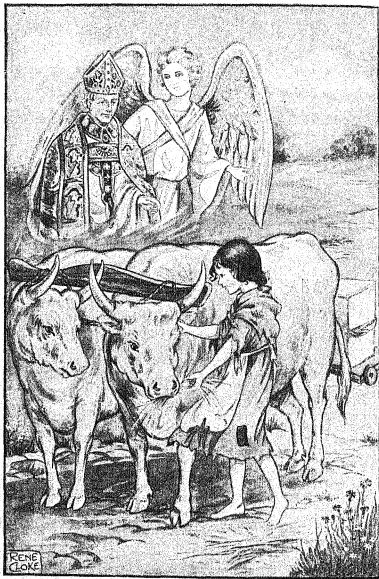
Their driver rose from the bank where he had been resting, and cried to his cattle to begin their journey. Now that they were refreshed and cheered, they moved off, straining at the thick ropes; and presently the great block of stone was being dragged slowly up the hill.

26. THE BISHOP'S DREAM.—II.

Words: to make amends figures manger

- Find out:*
- (1) What did the Bishop learn from his dream?
 - (2) How did he make up for his evil thoughts?
 - (3) When you have finished the story, turn back to Question 1 on page 102. Which word do you now think is the best to use for the Bishop?

When the Bishop saw that these were the humble workers of whose service God thought so much, he knew how proud and foolish he



“Look!” said the angel.’

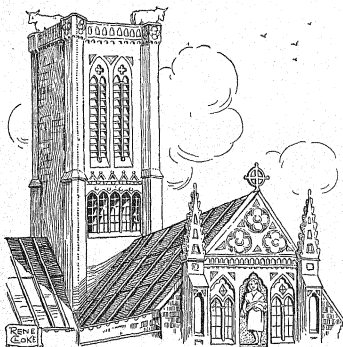
had been. In shame and sorrow he began to weep, and his falling tears awoke him. 'My thoughts have not been right thoughts,' he said, 'but I will try to make amends.'

That very day he sent for the master of the sculptors. Then he told him to fill the empty place over the cathedral doorway, not with a statue of himself but with an image of the little girl.

He told him, also, to make two great stone figures of the white oxen. When these figures were finished, they were set on high upon the tallest tower of the cathedral, so that all men could see them against the blue sky.

The image of the little girl was carved, with a bundle of hay in her hands. The child who had fed the oxen knew nothing of this, nor did she know that the statue over the doorway was her own self carved in stone. When she grew up, we are told, she forgot her childish service. Yet what she had done was not forgotten in Heaven.

As for the oxen on the tower, one looked eastward and the other looked westward across the wide country below the city on the hill. One caught the golden light of the rising sun, and the other was lit with the red blaze of sunset.



There they stood ; and the folk as they looked up at them felt glad that they were there. ' It is well,' said they, ' that these dumb labourers, who have helped to build God's house, should find a place of honour upon the house.'

They remembered, too, that the Master of that house had once been a little Babe, warmed in a manger by the breath of cattle. At the thought of this, men grew kinder to their cattle, and to the beasts that worked for them, and indeed to all dumb animals.

So the dream which had changed the Bishop's heart helped to teach men to value all good work, however humble it might be. It taught them also to think more about their fellow-creatures.

Bishop Evrard, when he died, was buried humbly, as he wished, before the great doorway of the church. To this day the stone figure of the little girl looks down upon him from on high ; and hundreds of folk step across the stone pavement above him, as they pass to praise and prayer in the house of God.

*Adapted from Canton's
'Child's Book of Saints.'*

Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

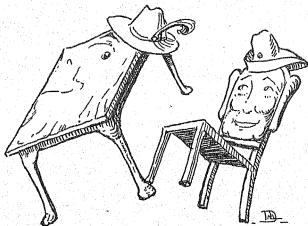
Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God.

St Matthew, v.



27. THE TABLE AND THE CHAIR.

Said the Table to the Chair,
'You can hardly be aware
How I suffer from the heat,
And from chilblains on my feet !
If we took a little walk,
We might have a little talk !
Pray let us take the air !'
Said the Table to the Chair.

Said the Chair to the Table,
'Now you *know* you are not able !
How foolishly you talk,
When you know we *cannot* walk !'
Said the Table with a sigh,
'It can do no harm to try ;
I've as many legs as you,
Why can't we walk on two ?'

So they both went slowly down,
 And walked about the town
 With a cheerful bumpy sound,
 As they toddled round and round.
 And everybody cried,
 As they hastened to their side,
 'See! the Table and the Chair
 Have come out to take the air!'

But in going down an alley,
 To a castle in the valley,
 They completely lost their way,
 And wandered all the day,
 Till, to see them safely back,
 They paid a Ducky-quack,
 And a Beetle, and a Mouse,
 Who took them to their house.



Then they whispered to each other,
 'O delightful little brother,
 What a lovely walk we've taken,
 Let us dine on Beans and Bacon!'
 So the Ducky and the leetle
 Brownny-Mousy and the Beetle
 Dined, and danced upon their heads
 Till they toddled to their beds.



Edward Lear.

28. HOW THE HERMIT THRUSH GOT HIS SONG.—I.

Words : council trail company

- Find out :* (1) Upon what journey did the eagle set out? Why did he go?
(2) How did the thrush do the journey? Why did he go?

In the deep forests of Canada, where once, before the white man came to his land, the Red Indian lived and hunted, there is a little bird called the hermit thrush.

This name must have been given to it because of its habit of nesting and singing alone in the depths of the forest, where it is seldom seen. Its song is a very beautiful one; and those Indians who are still left in Canada tell to their children, even to-day, the story of how the hermit thrush got its song.

Long, long ago, says the story, all the birds, from the smallest to the greatest, met beneath the Council Tree. As they talked there, they decided that a new song was needed upon earth, to strengthen and refresh the tired hearts of men. This song, they were told, could only

be heard in the home of the Great Spirit, beyond the long, long sky trail. Some bird would have to bring it from there, but who would set out on that far and lonely journey, so high above the earth? The birds all looked at one another, yet for some time none spoke. Each felt that his wings would never be strong enough to bear him along that trail.

A little thrush, who had come to the meeting with the others, longed with all his heart to hear the song in the Great Spirit's home. 'If I could only hear it once,' he thought to himself, 'I know that I should never forget it, and I could bring it back to earth to delight the hearts of men. How great an honour that would be for me! But, alas! my wings are small and weak. I can fly only a short way, and the great sky trail is so long, so very long!'

Now the eagle, the mighty king of all the birds, spoke to the company. 'I am your leader,' he said, 'and you know that I am the largest and strongest of you all. Therefore, I am the fittest one to fly along the great sky trail to the home of the Great Spirit, and to carry the song back to earth.' And he prepared to fly.

'But he cannot sing a note!' thought the little thrush. 'He can never bring back the song!'

As the eagle spread his wide, strong wings for flight, the thrush sprang forward. The next moment, before anyone saw him, he was nestling deep in the neck-feathers of the mighty bird.

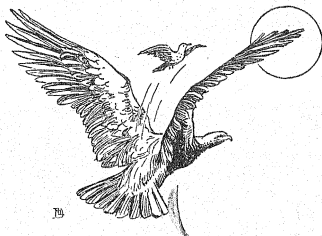
Up and up the eagle rose, above the forest, above the homes of man and beast, until the earth was left far beneath him. He had struck the great sky trail, and he flew strongly upwards; but he did not know that the thrush rested between his feathers.

29. HOW THE HERMIT THRUSH GOT HIS SONG.—II.

<i>Words :</i>	downcast	borne
	succeeded	soothed

Find out : (1) How did the hermit thrush finish the journey?
(2) What did the thrush do when he came back to earth? Why did he do that?

Up, up, and up the eagle went, straight for the gate of the Great Spirit's home, straight in the eye of the sun. The sun dazzled him, so



that even his bold, fierce eyes could not bear to look upon it ; and yet he could not see the end of the trail.

How weary his wings were growing now ! How slowly and painfully he was mounting ! He felt that his strength was going fast, and that in a moment or two he would drop earthwards.

Yes, now he was sinking. At that instant the little thrush sprang aloft from the eagle's feathers, and began to mount on fresh, untired wings along the sky trail.

Up and up he went, as the eagle had done. The way he had to go was not so very long, and even now he caught a glimpse of the end of the trail. At last he reached the gate of the Great Spirit's home.

Now he could hear the song. It poured forth, so sweet and glorious that the thrush's little heart throbbed with joy and wonder as he listened. He felt that he could remember every note ; and when it ended, he let himself drop gently earthwards. His heart was filled with pride. What a gift he had to bring for the sons of men !

He sank lower, nearer and nearer to the earth, until he reached the forest and the Council Tree. He saw the birds gathered there, and in their midst was their king, the eagle, with downcast looks and drooping head.

‘I have failed,’ he was saying sorrowfully. ‘I did not reach the Great Spirit’s home. I have not brought back the song.’

The thrush, proud of the new song, was about to alight in the midst of the company, and was even beginning to sing, when all at once he remembered something. He had succeeded, it was true, *but not by himself.*

If it had not been for the eagle’s strong wings, which had borne him the greater part of the journey, he knew that he would never have reached the Great Spirit’s home. The praise and honour for which he had longed were not all due to him alone ; and now he felt no longer proud, but very humble.

So he fluttered down until he was hidden in the thick bushes of the forest, and there he sang the song. Its sweetness charmed the birds and beasts, and soothed the hearts of men, but the little songster was not seen.

And that, says the old Indian story, is why the hermit thrush always hides himself in the forest.

American Indian Legend.

BIRDS' SONGS.

Do you ask what the birds say? The sparrow,
the dove,

The linnet and thrush say, 'I love and I love!'
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so
strong;

What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud
song.

But green leaves and blossoms and sunny warm
weather,

And singing and loving—all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings and he sings; and for ever sings
he—

'I love my Love, and my Love loves me!'

S. F. Coleridge.

30. A STRANGE BATTLE.—I.

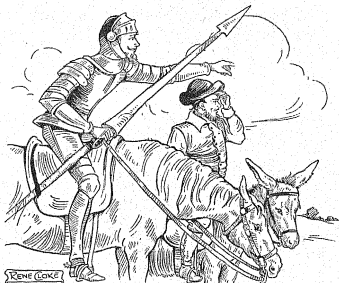
Don Quixote was a Spanish gentleman who read so many stories about the knights of old and their gallant deeds that he made up his mind to become a knight himself. With a simple country fellow, called Sancho Panza, for his squire, or servant, he wandered over the country, hoping to perform noble deeds, but usually doing rather silly things, as this story will show.

Words : **heathen** **Christian** **hillock**

Find out : (1) What did Don Quixote and his servant see coming across the plain ?
 (2) What story did Don Quixote make up about what they saw ?

One day, as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza were riding along a country road, they saw, in the distance, a great cloud of thick dust moving towards them.

At once Don Quixote turned to his squire and said, ' Oh, Sancho, this is the day in which I shall perform such deeds that the fame of them will be remembered in ages to come ! Do you see that cloud of dust, Sancho ? It is raised by a grèat army of many nations, who are on the march this way.'



‘There must be two armies, then, master,’ said Sancho Panza, looking behind him, ‘for on this other side there rises another cloud of dust.’

Don Quixote turned, and, seeing that it was so, felt highly pleased. He was quite sure that the two clouds were raised by two armies which were coming to fight in the middle of the plain ; for he thought of nothing else but battles and gallant deeds.

Now the clouds of dust that he saw were raised by two great flocks of sheep, going along the same road from different parts, and the dust hid them from sight until they came near.

Yet Don Quixote said so firmly that they were armies, that Sancho began to believe him.

‘Sir,’ said the squire, ‘what must we do?’

‘Why,’ replied Don Quixote, ‘we must go at once to help the weaker side. You must know that the army which marches towards us is commanded by the very great King Alifanfaron. This other, which marches behind us, is that of his enemy, King Pentapolin.’

‘But why do these two princes hate one another so?’ asked Sancho.

‘Because,’ answered Don Quixote, ‘this Alifanfaron is a furious heathen who wishes to marry the lovely Christian daughter of King Pentapolin; but her father will not allow the marriage unless King Alifanfaron becomes a Christian also.’

‘Upon my word,’ said Sancho, ‘Pentapolin is in the right; and so I will help him with all my power!’

‘In so doing you will do your duty, Sancho,’ replied his master.

He then told his squire to go with him to the top of a hillock a short way off, so that they might see the two armies advancing.

31. A STRANGE BATTLE.—II.

Words : **describe** **weapons** **volley**
 warriors **overcome** **enchanter**

Find out : (1) What did Don Quixote do when the
 'armies' came near?
 (2) What was his fate?

From the hillock the two flocks of sheep which Don Quixote mistook for armies might easily have been seen, if the clouds of dust which they raised had not blinded the sight. Don Quixote, however, saw in his fancy the two great armies, and began to describe all the warriors to Sancho. He spoke of each one's arms, colours, and weapons, just as if they had really been there.

Sancho Panza stood without speaking a word, only now and then he looked from side to side, to see whether he could discover the knights and giants of whom his master spoke. At last he said, 'Sir, not a single man, or giant, or knight, of all those you have named, appears anywhere; at least, I do not see one.'

'What, Sancho,' replied Don Quixote, 'do you not hear the neighing of the steeds, the sound of the trumpets, and the rattling of the drums?'

'I hear nothing,' answered Sancho, 'but the bleating of sheep and lambs.' And so it was, for now the two flocks had come very near them.

'You are so much afraid, Sancho,' said his master, 'that you can neither see nor hear properly. Yet since you fear so, stand aside and leave me alone. For I am able, with my single arm, to give the victory to the side which I shall favour with my help.'

As he spoke he set his lance, drove his spurs into his old horse's sides, and darted down the hillock like lightning.

Sancho cried aloud after him, 'Stop, stop, sir! Oh master, come back at once! Come back! They are nothing but lambs and sheep! Oh, woe upon us both! What madness is this? What is it you are doing?'

Don Quixote, however, rushed onward without a look behind him, crying out, 'Ho, knights! You that fight under the banner of the brave King Pentapolin, follow me all, and you shall see how easily I will overcome his enemy, Ali-fanfaron!'

So calling, he rushed into the midst of the sheep, and began to attack them with his lance as boldly as if he were indeed fighting his greatest enemies.

The, shepherds who were with the flocks



called out to him to stop ; then, seeing that he did not heed them, they pulled out their slings and shot a volley of large stones at him.

Don Quixote did not heed the stones, but, running hither and thither, he cried out, ' Where art thou, proud Alifanfaron ? Show thyself to me, and I will punish thee ! '

At that instant a great stone struck him a blow in the side. It was followed at once by another which struck him in the face, and knocked out three or four of his teeth. The blows were so heavy that the poor knight was stunned, and fell from his horse to the ground.

The shepherds ran to him, and, seeing him lying there, believed that they had killed him. They hastily gathered their flocks together, and marched off, without waiting for anything more.

All this time Sancho stood upon the hillock, crying aloud, tearing his beard, and wishing with all his heart that he had never met the foolish Don. At last, seeing him lying upon the road, and the shepherds gone, he ran to him. Don Quixote was much hurt, but he had not quite lost the use of his senses.

' Oh, oh, sir ! ' cried Sancho. ' Did I not call to you to come back, seeing that those you went to attack were a flock of sheep, and not an army of men ? '

‘It is the work of that enchanter, my enemy, of whom I have so often spoken to you,’ replied Don Quixote, when at last he found his voice. ‘He can make things seem what they are not; and he was so afraid lest I should win this battle that he changed the two armies into flocks of sheep.’ Sancho, however, was not at all ready to believe such a story.

Presently Don Quixote arose, and, tenderly nursing his hurt face, slowly mounted his horse and followed his squire from the scene of that strange battle.

Adapted from ‘Don Quixote.’



32. SONG OF THE WOODEN- LEGGED FIDDLER.

(*Portsmouth 1805*)

I lived in a cottage adown in the West
When I was a boy, a boy ;
But I knew no peace and I took no rest
Though the roses nigh smothered my snug little
nest ;
For the smell of the sea
Was much rarer to me,
And the life of a sailor was all my joy.

CHORUS.—*The life of a sailor was all my joy!*

My mother she wept, and she begged me to stay
Anchored for life to her apron-string,
And soon she would want me to help wi' the
hay ;
So I bided her time, then I flitted away
On a night of delight in the following spring,
With a pair of stout shoon
And a seafaring tune
And a bundle and stick in the light of the moon,
Down the long road
To Portsmouth I strode,
To fight like a sailor for country and king.

CHORUS.—*To fight like a sailor for country and
king.*

And now that my feet are turned homeward
again

My heart is still crying Ahoy ! Ahoy !

And my thoughts are still out on the Spanish
main

A-chasing the frigates of France and Spain,

For at heart an old sailor is always a boy ;

And his nose will still itch

For the powder and pitch

Till the days when he can't tell t'other from
which,

Nor a grin o' the guns from a glint o' the sea,

Nor a skipper like Nelson from lubbers like me.

CHORUS.—*Nor a skipper like Nelson from lubbers
like me.*

Ay ! Now that I'm old I'm as bold as the best,

And the life of a sailor is all my joy ;

Though I've swapped my leg

For a wooden peg,

And my head is as bald as a new-laid egg,

The smell of the sea

Is like victuals to me,

And I think in the grave I'll be crying Ahoy !

For, though my old carcass is ready to rest,

At heart an old sailor is always a boy.

CHORUS.—*At heart an old sailor is always a boy.*

Alfred Noyes.

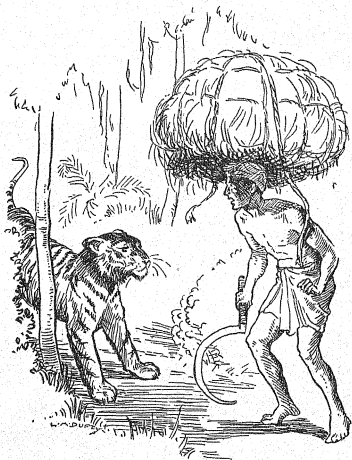
33. THE HONOURABLE TIGER.—I.

<i>Words :</i>	jungle	honourable
	bound	request

Find out : (1) What did the tiger ask the grass-cutter to do ?
(2) How did the grass-cutter save the tiger ?

It was noon time, when people in India prepare to eat their dinner. A grass-cutter, who had been busy since sunrise cutting grass for the cows of his master, was carrying on his head his load of grass, bound together in a coarse rope net. Trudging along through a very thick part of the jungle, he was alarmed by a tiger, which suddenly crashed out of the bushes and glared at him. The great beast stood in the middle of the track, lashing his tail.

The grass-cutter turned to run away. He was a long way from his home, and he knew that escape was almost hopeless, for the tiger, with his mighty power of springing, could catch him in one bound. So when the king of the jungle ceased lashing his tail and looked gently



at the man, as a sheep might look at her lamb, the grass-cutter saw that his only chance of safety was to listen when the tiger spoke.

‘Oh, grass-cutter, why are you frightened? Why would you run away?’ asked the animal.

‘Because you will kill and eat me,’ replied the trembling man.

‘Not so,’ answered the tiger. ‘Stay, I command you! I have something important to say to you. Listen! I am an honourable tiger. If you will hide me in your load of grass, I will treat you as I would treat my father and my mother.’

To this strange request the grass-cutter was willing to agree; indeed, he felt in such danger of his life that he had no other choice. He had no weapon with which to defend himself, except his reaping-hook, and no man can fight a tiger with a reaping-hook.

‘You are very big,’ said the grass-cutter; ‘and you are very heavy. I am a poor and weak man. How can I lift you on my head?’

‘There is only one thing for me to do then,’ snarled the huge animal, looking fierce. ‘I must kill you and eat you. It is noon and I am hungry.’

‘No, no!’ pleaded the grass-cutter in despair. ‘I have a wife and children to support. Spare my life, my lord!’

The man lowered his bundle of grass, and untied the rope that bound it. At once the tiger crept in and curled himself in the middle of the grass, as a cat might do. The grass-cutter

covered him over and tied the rope very carefully, so that not a bit of the creature's body could be seen. With a great effort he managed to get the load on his head, and as he staggered on his way he was bent nearly double under the weight.

The man had not gone far when he met a huntsman with a gun. 'Have you seen a tiger pass this way?' the huntsman asked.

'No, sir!' answered the grass-cutter. 'I have seen no tiger.'

'He is a man-eater, a very dangerous animal,' said the huntsman. 'He has killed several men, women, and children, so I have come out to shoot him.' With these words he passed on his way.



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34. THE HONOURABLE TIGER.—II.

Words : buffaloes jackal impossible

- Find out :*
- (1) How did the tiger repay the grass-cutter for saving him?
 - (2) How was the grass-cutter saved from the tiger in the end?
 - (3) The tiger said that he was an 'honourable' tiger. What name would you give him?

No sooner had the huntsman gone than the tiger began to struggle to be free. 'You have tied me too tight; let me out,' he growled. So the grass-cutter lifted the load from his head and placed it under a tree. When he had untied the rope, the tiger sprang out.

'You are a wicked man!' said the tiger. 'You lied to the huntsman. Lies are always punished. As I am an honourable tiger, and never lie, I must punish you.'

'I lied to save your life,' cried the unhappy man. 'The huntsman had come out to shoot you, and I protected you.'

The tiger paid no heed to what the grass-cutter said. 'You are a fine fat man. I shall kill you and eat you,' he snarled.

'But you promised to treat me as you would treat your father and your mother,' said the grass-cutter.

'I care not for promises,' answered the tiger. 'That is the way of the jungle.'

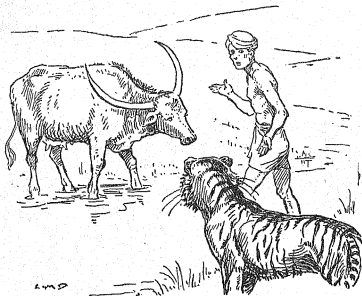
'But it is not the way of the world,' replied the grass-cutter. 'With us it is good for evil——'

'It is not so in the jungle,' snapped the tiger. 'With us it is evil for good. Ask this tree.'

'Alas, alas!' sighed the tree, 'the tiger is right and you are wrong. See what a pleasant shade I cast around me; how cool it is for tired travellers to rest and eat their bread. And yet, when they have rested and are refreshed, they look up and say, "If this tree were cut down it would make fine boxes and strong beds."'

'Ah! Now that you have heard what the tree has said, you see that I am right,' growled the tiger. 'I am an honourable tiger, and I must keep to the ways of the jungle folk.'

The grass-cutter was not going to give in, so he said calmly, 'What can a tree know? His head is of wood! Let us first ask advice of yonder herd of buffaloes.'



The tiger agreed, so he and the man made their way towards the buffaloes. They spoke to an old cow buffalo who was grazing apart. She looked up and listened when they began their story, which told how the man had hidden the tiger in his load of grass, and how he had lied to save the tiger's life, and how the tiger had promised to treat the grass-cutter as he would treat his own father and mother.

The old cow buffalo shook her head. 'All those buffaloes you see grazing around me are my children and my grandchildren. They drank of my milk when they were young. I

protected them. Now that they are strong and I am old and weak, they thrust their horns into my sides and push me away angrily; they will not even allow me to graze near them. The tiger is right; it is always evil for good.'

'Surely you see now that I speak the truth, my brother,' said the tiger. 'Come, I am hungry.'

'Wait, wait!' cried the grass-cutter, who was now sorry that he had not left the tiger to the huntsman, who would have shot him. 'Let us seek the advice of yet a third judge.' Again the tiger agreed, feeling certain that the advice would be the same.

At this moment a jackal peeped out of the jungle.

'Oh, jackal!' they both cried. 'Give judgment between us.'

The tiger explained the case. 'On what you say depends my dinner and this man's life,' he added.

When the jackal heard of the quarrel, he pretended to look very wise, and, as is the manner of his tribe, he decided on a cunning trick.

'How can I believe this story?' he asked. He turned to the tiger and said, 'Unless I see you hidden in the load of grass, so that I may

be sure that you are speaking the truth, it is impossible for me to give judgment.'

The tiger, who was hungry and anxious for his meal, ordered the grass-cutter to show the jackal exactly how he had been hidden. He told the grass-cutter to open the load of grass again, and the tiger crept in as before and was tied up inside.

Then said the judge, 'I see now that you have spoken the truth. And as evil for good is the way of the jungle, I command this man to throw you into the deepest part of the river so that you may be drowned.'

This the grass-cutter did joyfully, and that was the end of the honourable tiger.

K. Compton.

35. NAPOLEON AND THE ENGLISH SAILOR.

Words : emperor sergeant
 heavy-hearted flag of truce

- Find out :* (1) What great wish did the English sailor have ?
(2) How did he plan to escape ? What happened when he tried ?
(3) What is the surprise ending of this story ?

I

Once Napoleon, the famous Emperor of France, was at a port on the French coast, waiting for a chance to bring his army across to England. He had his fleet ready, and a number of his warships sailed about in the waters outside the harbour, hoping to capture, if they could, any ships that belonged to the English.

One day a French ship took prisoner a young British seaman. He was a humble sailor, a poor English lad of no great importance. So, though they had captured him, the French

did not trouble to guard him very carefully, but let him wander about every day on the sea-shore beyond the harbour. They knew that he was safe enough, for he could not go back to England without a ship, and no ship would carry him away from France.

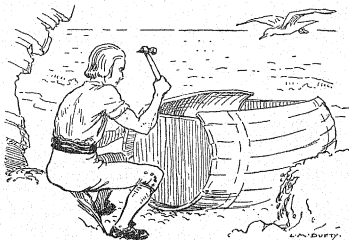
Day after day the poor prisoner used to roam about the shore. Often, as he sat in some cave, he would watch the birds that left the land and flew over the sea towards the white cliffs of Dover.

‘They are going home—to my home!’ he thought sadly. ‘I wonder whether my mother will see them, and whether I shall ever see her again! How I long to be afloat once more, even if it were in the tiniest cockle-shell of a boat in the midst of a storm, so long as the storm would carry me nearer to England!’

2

One morning in the early dawn, as he wandered on the shore, too heavy-hearted to sleep, he saw something large and dark bobbing on the waves. He waited a little while until the tide brought it nearer, and then he waded into the sea and dragged it ashore. It was a big cask of wood, empty but quite sound.

The young man rolled it to the cave, where



he hid it carefully. There he began to work upon it, with such poor tools as he could find or make, until at last he had formed it into a tiny boat.

Such a poor little boat it was—surely the weakest that ever ventured on a pond! Yet the sailor meant to try to get across the Channel in it, though he had neither tar for its sides, nor keel, nor sail, nor rudder. Still, he thought, it would float; perhaps it might carry him home.

He kept his find a great secret, for no one must know what he was doing, or what he meant to do. At dusk he stole into the woods that lay near the shore, and there he cut stout branches of willow, which he wove into bands to bind the planks of his boat.

At last, one calm night, all was ready. There was no moon, but it was not quite dark, and the waves lapped quietly upon the shore, as he dragged his boat softly out of the cave and down to the water's edge. It was already afloat, and he was just about to step into it, when a rough voice called 'Halt!'

He looked behind him. There stood a French sergeant, who ordered his men to surround the prisoner, and to take his boat. They did so, with many a laugh and jeer at the poor little vessel. 'So you meant to cross to England in *that*, did you?' cried the sergeant, and joined in his men's laughter.

3

The sailor was led away; but soon afterwards the story came to the ears of the Emperor. He saw the boat that the young man had made, and presently he ordered the Englishman to be brought before him.

'Surely,' he said to him, 'since you were so rash as to trust yourself to a poor little shell like that to get across the Channel, there must be upon the other side someone whom you wish very much to see.'

'Yes,' replied the young man simply. 'There is someone. My mother and I have not met



for many years, and I have a great longing to see her.'

'And so you shall,' said Napoleon at once. 'It must be a noble mother who has so brave a son as you. Take this.' With these words he put a piece of gold into the lad's hand.

A day or so later, by the Emperor's commands, the sailor was shipped to England under a flag of truce; and so he reached his native land and his mother safely.

Many a time after that, in his wanderings up and down the world, this sailor had to face a hard life, and often he had to go without a meal. Yet he never parted with the gold coin which he had received from the great Napoleon.

36. TAKING THEIR MEDICINE.

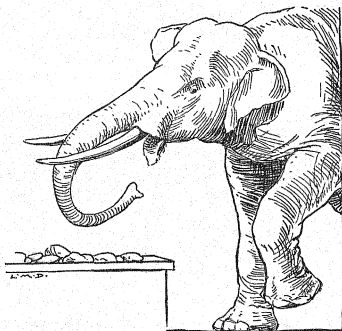
<i>Words :</i>	proverb	appetite
	patient	dangled

- Find out :*
- (1) How did the elephant take his powder ?
 - (2) How did the ant-eater take his castor-oil ?
 - (3) How did the spoonbill take his medicine ?

I

'You can take a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink,' says an old proverb. At the Zoo hospital, where sick animals are nursed back to health and happiness, the Zoo doctors will tell you that you can show a 'patient' a pill or a powder but you cannot make him swallow it. So, very often, the doctors have to use some trick; but even then they may not succeed, for some animal patients are clever enough to see through such tricks.

I remember a sick elephant who had to take a very bitter powder. The elephant would not swallow the powder as it was, so the doctors had to think of a way out of the difficulty.



In the end they remembered that this animal had a great liking for potatoes. A large potato was found, and carefully cut in two ; half of the inside part was scooped out, the powder was put in its place, and the potato was closed again. Then the doctors placed the cut potato on a tray which was full of whole potatoes, and invited the elephant to taste them.

Having eaten a few sound potatoes, the sick animal at last picked up the one which held the powder. He popped it into his mouth, and,

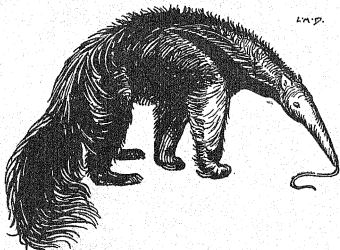
with a few hurried crunches, it was gone. The doctors' little trick had succeeded! Still, the animal must have guessed that there was something queer about that last potato, for after he had swallowed it his appetite suddenly disappeared!

Luckily for the doctors, elephants seldom fall ill, and when they do, the medicines given to them are nearly all of the pleasant kind. One animal, who had received a sweet medicine for an attack of stomach pains, even pretended to be ill after he was cured, in order to get his daily dose of medicine. His trick was soon found out by the doctors!

2

Not all Zoo medicines, however, are pleasant to take. When they are bitter, the doctors often hide them in a lump of loaf-sugar. Many animals have such a liking for loaf-sugar that they do not seem to mind very much if it tastes of medicine.

One of the best patients I ever knew was a young giraffe, who took his medicine three times a day. The keeper told me that this medicine had a very bitter taste; but the giraffe did not mind taking it, for it was given to him on a lump of loaf-sugar!



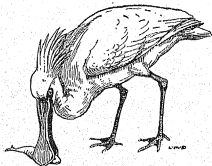
Some years ago the Zoo doctors had to give castor-oil to an ant-eater, but nothing would make the animal swallow it. Later, the doctors discovered a way out of their difficulty: they poured a little of the oil over the patient's head. It was quickly licked off by the animal's long, worm-like tongue, and in this way the ant-eater swallowed his castor-oil!

One day a bird called a spoonbill, who lived in one of the big outdoor cages, suddenly became very ill. The patient was taken over to the Zoo hospital, where it was decided that the only cure was castor-oil. Now, most birds dislike castor-oil as much as we do, so the medicine had to be mixed in the bird's food. Since a spoonbill lives mostly on fish, the only thing to

be done was to open a fish and fill it with castor-oil.

I have seen many Zoo medicines being made, but this was without a doubt the worst of them all to prepare. Still, it was finished at last, and the 'castor-oil fish' was dangled before the open beak of the spoonbill. Being a greedy bird, he at once swallowed it, and so he took his medicine. I am glad to say that, after a day or two, the spoonbill was well enough to be sent back to his cage.

Craven Hill.



37. THE QUEEN'S COMING.

Mary, Queen of Scots, spent her childhood in sunny France. It was a sad day for her when she left that country to become Queen of Scotland, for the rest of her life is an unhappy story.

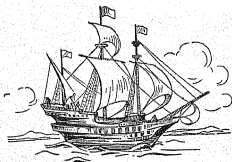
. . . It was a labouring barque, that slowly
held its way,
And o'er its lee the coast of France in the light
of evening lay.
And on its deck a lady sat, who gazed with
tearful eyes
Upon the far-receding hills that dim and distant
rise.

No marvel that the lady wept—there was no
land on earth
She loved like that dear land, although she owed
it not her birth ;
It was her mother's land, the land of childhood
and of friends—
It was the land where she had found for all
her grief amends.

No marvel that the lady wept—it was the land
of France,
The chosen home of chivalry, the garden of
romance !
The past was bright like those dear hills so far
behind her barque ;
The future, like the gathering night, was ominous
and dark.

One gaze again—one long, last gaze. ‘Adieu,
fair France, to thee !’
The breeze comes forth—she is alone on the
unthinking sea.

H. G. Bell.



38. THE QUEEN ESCAPES.

A Play in Five Scenes

Mary, Queen of Scots, had become the prisoner of the Scottish nobles. They placed her in Lochleven Castle, a strong castle on an island in Loch Leven, thinking that there could be no escape from there.

The People in the Play

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.	WILL DRYSDALE, Captain of the Castle Guard.
JANE } her maids.	Sir William's wife ;
MARIA }	ladies of Sir William's
THE QUEEN'S SURGEON.	household ; soldiers of
WILLIE DOUGLAS, a page-boy at the Castle.	the guard ; servants.
SIR WILLIAM, Governor of the Castle.	LORD SETON, a friend of Mary.

Words: surgeon realm nieces plague

SCENE I.

Queen Mary's Room in Lochleven Castle. The QUEEN sits at a table, writing. Her maids, JANE and MARIA, are sewing. Her SURGEON is looking out of the window. It is the morning of May 1st, 1568.

QUEEN : There, my letter is finished. [*Reading*] 'From my prison, this 1st May, Your very

humble and very obedient Daughter, MARIE. To the Queen of France, my mother-in-law.' Prison, yes! Would that I could escape from it! [*She begins to pace up and down the room.*] My friends make plans to help me, but some evil fortune seems to follow me. I believe I shall die here.

SURGEON [*turning from the window*]: Your Majesty must calm yourself and rest awhile.

QUEEN: Rest! Rest! How can I rest, when I have lost a kingdom? How can I rest when I, the lawful Queen of this realm, am shut up here in this island castle, with yon Sir William, his mother, his wife, his sisters, his nieces, aye, and his spies, to keep watch on me at every turn? How can I rest? O that I could escape! [*Enter WILLIE DOUGLAS on tiptoe.*] Well, boy?

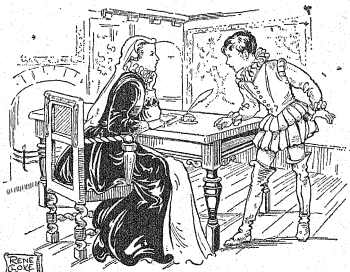
WILLIE: Madam, I would speak with your Majesty alone. [*The QUEEN makes a sign to the SURGEON, JANE, and MARIA to leave the room.*]

QUEEN: Now, Willie, we are alone. Have you some message?

WILLIE: Yes, your Majesty, I have a message which, I doubt not, will rejoice your Majesty's heart.

QUEEN: What, then? Tell me quickly!

WILLIE: Your Majesty knows well that, could



you but reach yonder shore, you would have friends in plenty.

QUEEN : Indeed, boy, I know that so well that my heart nigh breaks in thinking of it. To be near the shore is of little use, for no boat could approach the castle unseen.

WILLIE [*in a low voice*] : Your Majesty, this castle has boats ; and if we could but have the loan of one of them, all would be well. There is little chance to escape in the daytime, for then your Majesty is closely watched, but in the evening when you are in your room, and Sir William and his household are at supper, the watch is less closely kept.

QUEEN : What bold plan is this, boy ? You

must know well enough that the castle gate is locked at seven o'clock every evening, and that Sir William keeps the keys as though they were the Crown Jewels.

WILLIE [*with a sly look in his eye*] : Aye, your Majesty, but maybe a cunning fellow might find a way to lay hold of the keys.

QUEEN : Lay hold of the keys, when Sir William keeps them under his nose all through supper, and, I dare say, sleeps with them beneath his pillow !

WILLIE : If your Majesty will but trust me, and be ready to-morrow evening after supper, I will not fail you. Certain noble lords, good friends of yours, bade me tell you that they will be waiting on the shore ready to come to your Majesty's help. [*He goes out.*]

SCENE II.

The same room. Next day, Sunday, about 7 o'clock in the evening. The QUEEN is finishing supper; JANE and MARIA are waiting upon her at table; SIR WILLIAM is looking out of the window; WILL DRYSDALE is seated near the door.

SIR WILLIAM [*suddenly*] : What is yon knave doing at the boats at this hour of the night ?

[WILL DRYSDALE *crosses towards window*; SIR WILLIAM *shouts*] 'Hi, boy, hi!—He does not hear me. [*To WILL DRYSDALE*] Will, go thou and see what tricks the young rogue is up to now. 'Tis Willie Douglas, or I'm a Turk! Whip him inside!

QUEEN [*rising and putting her hand to her head*]: Oh! [*She pretends to faint. WILL, passing near, catches her in his arms.*] Wine, please, a little wine. [*JANE and MARIA put a glass of wine to her lips, and help her to a chair.*]

SIR WILLIAM [*hurrying over*]: The Queen is ill. Let someone make haste for the Surgeon.

QUEEN: 'Tis nothing. 'Twill soon pass. I pray you, Sir William, do not delay your supper, for your people will, I know, be waiting. Methinks I will go up to my room to rest awhile and pray. [*To MARIA*] You may stay, Maria, till I come down. Jane will give me her arm.

[*She goes out, leaning on JANE's arm.*]

SIR WILLIAM [*to MARIA*]: If the Queen has need of the Surgeon, he will be found at supper with me. [*To WILL*] Come, Will, let us away to supper. We are late already. [*They go out together.*]

SCENE III.

The Great Hall of the castle. SIR WILLIAM and his household are finishing supper. The keys of the castle are lying on the table, beside SIR WILLIAM's left hand. SERVANTS are standing by; one of them is WILLIE DOUGLAS, who has a napkin over his arm and stands behind SIR WILLIAM's chair.

SIR WILLIAM [*leaning back and wiping his mouth*] : More wine, boy ! [WILLIE goes out. SIR WILLIAM turns to the SURGEON, who sits on his right] You were saying, Master Surgeon——?

SURGEON : I was saying, sir, that though London is so great a city, I am always glad to be out of it.

SIR WILLIAM'S WIFE : How so, Master Surgeon?

[*At this point WILLIE DOUGLAS enters again, and places a fresh glass of wine beside SIR WILLIAM. As he does so, he drops his napkin on the keys and picks them up with the napkin. SIR WILLIAM, still turning towards the SURGEON, reaches out his left hand and feels for his glass.*]

SURGEON [*talking on quickly, to prevent SIR WILLIAM from missing the keys*] : Why, in the first place, 'tis so evil-smelling a place that were it not for the river I could not bear an hour of it. In the second place, there is too much work for doctors, for scarce a year passes with-



out a plague of some kind. Then again, the place is as full of thieves as a beggar's dog is of fleas. Why, they do say that they have thieves there that could steal the nose from a man's face, did he but look the other way. [*The others at the table laugh heartily.*]

SIR WILLIAM [*banging his left fist on table*]: Ha! I have yet to meet the man who could rob me! [*Suddenly, to WILLIE DOUGLAS, who stands behind him*] Boy! What did'st thou down at the boats to-night? I had almost forgotten about that.

WILLIE [*scared*]: Why, sir, I—I did but tie up a boat that was not well fastened.

SIR WILLIAM [*roaring*]: Tie up a boat, indeed! 'Tis none of thy business to tie up boats! Let me not see thee at it again! Begone!

WILLIE [*hurrying out*]: Yes, sir. I mean—no, sir!

SCENE IV.

The courtyard of the castle. WILLIE comes from the castle door, bearing the keys in one hand.

WILLIE: Sir William wished me begone! Little knows he how much I am going to take him at his word. [*Looking towards an upper window of the castle.*] I wonder if her Majesty

is ready. [*He whistles softly.*] They have seen me! If we can but reach the boat, all will be well, for I have so tied and chained all the other boats that they cannot be set free for an hour or more.

[*The QUEEN and JANE appear.*]

QUEEN: What news, lad? Hast thou the keys of the gateway, and is the boat ready?

WILLIE: All is prepared, your Majesty. Now we must make all haste. Sh! [*He drags the QUEEN and JANE aside as two servants pass across the courtyard and enter the door of the castle.*] Now, let us be off!

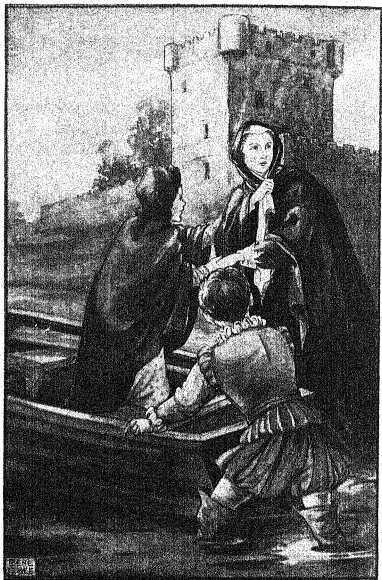
[*QUEEN, JANE, and WILLIE go out, and the sound is heard of a heavy gate slamming and of a lock being turned. Very soon after, a sudden shouting comes from inside the castle. WILL DRYSDALE and his soldiers come running from the castle door, shouting 'The keys! The keys! Look to the Queen!'*]

WILL DRYSDALE: To the gate! To the gate!

[*Soldiers run off to the left and in a moment or two run back.*]

SOLDIER: We are too late, sir. The gate is locked.

SIR WILLIAM [*hurrying from the castle into the courtyard*]: Locked! Then burst the gate open, burst it open! There is a heavy oak beam



in the kitchen. [*Soldiers rush off to kitchen on the right, except SIR WILLIAM and WILL DRYSDALE.*] Now I guess what that young rascal was about when I saw him at the boats. Oh! This will cost me my head!

SCENE V.

The shore of Loch Leven. On a hillside overlooking the loch LORD SETON and a party of men are crouched in the bushes.

LORD SETON: She comes, I see the boat. The Queen did wave her white veil, as we agreed. [*A short time passes, then the QUEEN, JANE, WILLIE DOUGLAS appear, along with a soldier who had gone to meet them. LORD SETON falls on his knee before the QUEEN.*] Now, Heaven be praised, your Majesty is safe. Let us to horse, and with God's help we shall soon win back that kingdom which is yours by right.

CURTAIN

T. Kelly.

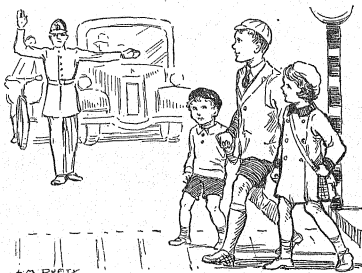


39. KEEPERS.

'Are you a careful Keeper
Of the Highway Code,
Busy, busy farmer's boy?
All around the village,
All along the lane,
Leading mares to market
And driving back again,
Are you a careful Keeper
Of the Highway Code?'
'Always,' said the farmer's boy.

'Are you a careful Keeper
Of the Highway Code,
Messenger on shining wheels?
Cycling in the country,
Cycling into town,
Climbing where the path goes
Winding up and down,
Are you a careful Keeper
Of the Highway Code?'
'Always,' said the boy on wheels.

KEEPERS



‘ Will you be careful Keepers
Of the Highway Code,
Always, as you walk to school?
Looking round for safety,
Down among the shops,
Crossing at the beacons
While the traffic stops,
Will you be careful Keepers
Of the Highway Code?’
‘ Certainly!’ they cried at school.

Isabel M. Laird.

40. CLIMBER SAVES THE DEN.

Climber was the most daring of a family of three Canadian wolf-cubs. Starlight, his father, and Aurora, his mother, had left the cubs alone in the den for a short time ; this story tells what happened when they returned.

Words :

relief

fang

generally

undergrowth

Find out : (1) What worried Aurora and made Starlight angry ?

(2) How was the den saved from danger ?

When Starlight came back to the rocky cliff in which his den was, he found Aurora at the foot of it, waiting for him. She was greatly worried at something that had happened.

Silently, with hair on end, she led Starlight to a point from which they could see the den ; and as Starlight looked down, a fierce glare came into his eyes. All over his body his hair stood on end, and if anyone had wanted to know how angry a real wild wolf can look, he should have seen Starlight at that moment.

The parent wolves glanced at each other, for there, in the centre of the cubs' playground,

right in front of their den, sat the greatest bear Starlight had ever seen !

The old bear looked sleepy ; perhaps he had not been long awake from his winter sleep. Certainly he did not look as if he was there to make a nuisance of himself ; he did not even seem to know that he was on forbidden ground. With many deep grunts, he was scratching himself from end to end, bringing his huge fore-paws to work, and twisting himself as if there was not a bone in his body. He seemed to find it a relief to sit somewhere away from the flies.

Presently, a small wet nose and two bright eyes appeared at the mouth of the wolves' den. It was Climber looking out, as indeed he generally was when he had received orders to stay below. He saw the bear, like a great fur-clad mountain, sitting in the centre of their playground. He did not know what it was, and he did not care very much. It had no right to be there, and he knew that Starlight, his father, and Aurora, his mother, would not like it.

Climber decided to set things right. Yelping and snarling, he shot from the mouth of the den, and hurled himself, fang and claw, full into the old bear's back.

If ever a bear was taken by surprise that bear was ! He did not wait to find out what

had done it; he did not even look. All he knew was that something was attacking him, so he uttered one grunt of terror and surprise, and fled! Nor did he wait to consider the best way down. He went clean over the edge of the playground and landed with a thump twenty feet below. Whether, in doing so, he hurt himself, or whether it was because of fear, one cannot say, but he went off yelling at the top of his voice. And Starlight's family could hear him still yelling and whimpering as he crashed through the undergrowth a mile below.

At the edge of the playground, looking down, sat Climber, a fluffy ball of a wolf-cub, not much larger than a hedgehog!

*From 'Starlight,' by
H. Mortimer Batten.*



41. ROBINSON CRUSOE'S HOUSE.

No doubt you have heard of Robinson Crusoe, who, after being shipwrecked, was cast ashore on a lonely island, where he lived alone for several years. In this chapter he tells us how he built his house upon the island.

Words :

stakes
cable

entrance
compasses

cargo

- Find out :* (1) Where did Robinson Crusoe build his 'house'? Make a sketch of the 'house,' showing how it was laid out.
- (2) Crusoe thought that he was like a king. Over whom did he rule?

I

I found a little plain on the side of a rising hill, whose front towards this little plain was a rock as steep as a house-side. So no savage creatures, men or beasts, if any were in the island, could come upon me from the top.

On the side of this rock there was a hollow

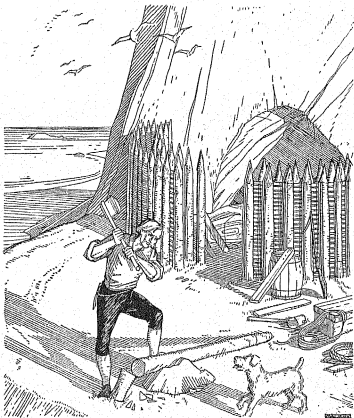
place worn a little way in, like the door of a cave; but there was not really any cave, or way into the rock at all.

On the flat of the green, just before this hollow place, I decided to pitch my tent. This plain lay like a green before my door, and at the end it went down every way to the low grounds by the sea-side. It was on the north-west side of the hill, so that I was sheltered from the heat every day till the sun came near the setting.

Before I set up my tent, I drew a half-circle before the hollow place. In this half-circle I pitched two rows of strong stakes, driving them into the ground till they stood very firm. The end of each stake stood out of the ground about five feet and a half, and was sharpened at the top.

Then I took the pieces of cable which I had cut in the ship, and laid them in rows one upon another between these two rows of stakes, up to the top. I placed other stakes on the inside, leaning against them, like a spur to a post. This fence was so strong that neither man nor beast could get into it or over it.

Into this fence, or fortress, I carried all my food, gunpowder, and stores. I made a large tent, and into it I brought everything that



would spoil by the rains. Having thus enclosed all my goods, I built up the entrance of the fence, which till now I had left open, and so passed in and out by a ladder. When I was in, I lifted the ladder over after me. Thus I was completely fenced in, and so I slept safely in the night.

When I had done this, I began to cut a way into the rock ; and thus I made a cave just behind my tent, which served me like a cellar, or kitchen, to my house. It cost me much labour and many days before all these things were perfectly finished.

Now I began to make such things as I found I most wanted. I made a table and a chair out of the short pieces of boards that I brought on my raft from the ship. I made large shelves all along one side of my cave, to lay all my tools, nails, and ironwork. I knocked pieces into the wall of the rock, to hang my guns and all things that would hang up.

I brought out of the ship, in the voyages which I made to it, several things of less value, but not less useful to me. I got pens, ink, and paper ; three or four compasses, three good Bibles, and other books, which I carefully stored away.

We had in the ship a dog and two cats. I carried both the cats with me. As for the dog, he jumped out of the ship of himself, and swam on shore to me the day after I went there with my first cargo.

He was a trusty servant to me many years.

I went without nothing that he could fetch me, nor did I lack company while he was with me. I only wanted to have him talk to me, but that he would not do.

I did, after some trouble, catch a young parrot, and I brought it home, but it was some years before I could make him speak. However, at last I taught him to call me by my name.

How like a king I dined all alone, attended by my servants! There was my Majesty, the prince and lord of the whole island. Poll, as if he had been my favourite, was the only person permitted to talk to me. My dog sat always at my right hand; and two cats, one on one side of the table and one on the other, expecting now and then a bit from my hand as a mark of special favour.

Adapted from Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe.'

Poor old Robinson Crusoe,
 Poor old Robinson Crusoe;
 They made him a coat
 Of an old nanny goat—
 I wonder how they could do so!
 With a ring-a-ting-ting
 And a ring-a-ting-tang,
 I wonder how they could do so!

42. QUEER CREATURES OF THE DEEP.—I.

Words : ocean shrimps sucker
 coral reef victim impossible

- Find out :* (1) What are the names of the creatures shown on page 172? Which is which?
 (2) Of what use are they to one another?
 (3) Why is an octopus to be feared?

I

In the mighty ocean, as well as in lakes and rivers, are to be found many queer creatures, some strangely shaped or coloured, others having strange ways of living. Let us look at some of these.

Here is one which seems to be not a living creature but a flower ; indeed its name reminds us of a flower, for it is called the sea-anemone. Sometimes it is called a sea-rose, and the name is quite a good one, for at its upper end the sea-anemone has a ring of feelers, or tentacles, which are spread out like the petals of a rose.

If you wander among the rocks when the

tide is out you are almost sure to come across a few sea-anemones, but the brightest of these 'flowers of the sea' are found amid the coral reefs of Australia or Japan.

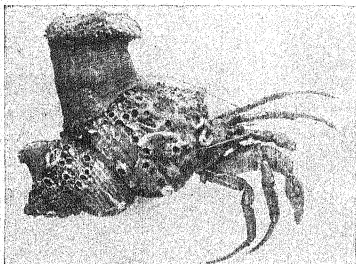
The sea-anemone, however, is not so delightful as he looks. For one thing, he has a wide mouth and a hearty appetite, and can swallow shrimps and small fish at a gulp. His body is soft, like a jelly, so that he cannot do much against such creatures while they are alive; but, at the tip of each tentacle, he carries a poison-bag, inside which sharp-pointed threads are coiled. When the sea-anemone meets what seems to him a tasty tit-bit, one of the threads is thrust forth. It pierces the skin, the poison flows out, and his victim is soon in his power.

For this reason, other small creatures of the deep keep away from the 'rose of the sea.'

The sea-anemone has, however, one friend, the hermit-crab. This crab, being very timid, lives all by himself in the empty shell of some shell-fish. Even so, he does not feel too safe, and, should he chance to meet with a sea-anemone, he takes him on his back.

Having now a roof over his head, the hermit-crab feels much safer, for all around him, like a gay umbrella, spread out those poison tentacles. 'No one can harm me now,' he tells

himself. The sea-anemone, too, feels safer and more comfortable than when standing on his one foot, which, since it is shaped like a sucker, is not much good for walking, though it is perfect for holding-on. Indeed, the sea-anemone



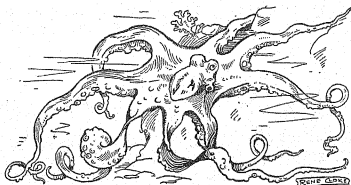
Bastin.

A SEA-SIDE PUZZLE

finds the hermit-crab very useful, for his tentacles steal the food which the crab catches !

2

A much more alarming sea-creature is the octopus, which, luckily, visits our shores but rarely. In distant seas, however, the octopus is one of the giants of the deep, for he may



be as much as forty feet long. He has a soft, rubber-like body, a sharp nose, big staring eyes, and eight long and strong tentacles ringed round his ever-hungry mouth..

Neither men nor shell-fish care to find themselves within reach of those eight arms ; for each has, on its under side, a double row of suckers by means of which the octopus can take such a firm grip of any creature that it is almost impossible to get free.

The arms of the octopus also serve as legs, on which he rambles about the floor of the ocean. If he wishes to go more quickly than his arms can carry him, he has in his body a funnel which he uses as a squirt, the force of the action shooting him backwards at a good pace.

Sometimes he squirts away the sand, and makes in the ocean bed a sort of hollow in

which he can rest. There he lies half-buried, and waits for a crab to come by—for a tasty crab is one of his chief delights.

Two can play at this game, however, for the whale is as fond of octopus as the octopus is of crab; indeed, he can swallow the octopus whole!

43. QUEER CREATURES OF THE DEEP.—II.

Words : surface morsels explore
 propeller pierces gills

- Find out :* (1) Why does the flying-fish have this name?
(2) What does the saw-fish do with its saw? What does the sword-fish do with its sword?
(3) How does the electric ray defend itself?

I

In our time we have become quite used to the sight of aeroplanes and sea-planes. Yet, in some parts of the Pacific Ocean, as well as on the coasts of India, China, and western America,



The furious sword-fish swam around him.'

are to be found fish which knew all about flying long before man did.

Passengers on board ocean liners love to watch the gay antics of the flying-fish, now swimming beneath the waves, now cutting through the air, and again skimming along the surface of the water.

When swimming under water, the flying-fish folds both pairs of fins against his sides; but when chased by other fish, he 'takes off' by thrashing the water with his tail, which acts as a propeller and shoots him up into the air. At once his fore-fins are spread out like planes, and he glides swiftly through the air for several seconds. As soon as he touches the water, the 'propeller' begins to work again, and he skims along the surface like a sea-plane. Often he 'takes off' four times before diving below the surface again.

It is said that if men had studied the ways of the flying-fish, rather than those of birds, they would have found the secret of flying much sooner.

2

Flying-fish are harmless little creatures, but there are large and fierce deep-sea fish which no swimmer or diver cares to meet.

The saw-fish and the sword-fish are two of these. The one has a snout shaped like a sharp-toothed saw, while the nose of the other is like a very long sword. It is thought that the saw-fish uses his saw chiefly as a spade with which to dig juicy morsels from the mud at the bottom of the sea. The sword-fish, however, does not think twice about running his sword through the body of any foe ; sometimes he pierces the bottom of a boat with it.

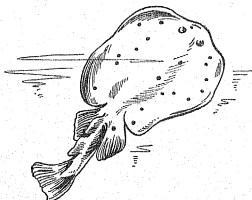
A diver was once being lowered to the bed of the ocean in order to explore the wreck of a sunken ship. On his way, he spied a baby sword-fish gazing at him through the green waters. Feeling rather afraid, he killed the little sword-fish. At once the angry mother came into view, and tried to run her sword through the diver's body.

The man gave the signal to his friends above, and they began to haul him up. As he rose, the furious sword-fish swam around him, seeking to find a weak spot in his diving-suit ; and it was only when he was quite near the surface that she gave up the chase. By that time the diver had fainted with fright !

Another fish which it is worth while to avoid is the electric ray ; it is found in many parts of the world.

This fish has a round body and a long tail, dark above and white beneath. It has beneath its gills a large number of electric cells with which, when it is faced with an enemy, it can give an electric shock. Bathers who touch an electric ray may feel a sharp sting and tingle; but if the fish is a big one it can give a fully-grown man a shock from which he may not recover for several days.

Marie Bayne.



*Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't
you join the dance?*

'You can really have no notion how delightful
it will be,

When they take us up and throw us, with the
lobsters, out to sea!'

But the snail replied, 'Too far, too far!'
and gave a look askance—

Said he thanked the whiting kindly, but he
would not join the dance.

*Would not, could not, would not, could not, would
not join the dance.*

*Would not, could not, would not, could not, would
not join the dance.*

'What matters it how far we go?'

his scaly friend replied.

'There is another shore, you know, upon the
other side.

The further off from England the nearer is to
France—

Then turn not pale, beloved snail, but come
and join the dance.

*Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will
you join the dance?*

*Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't
you join the dance?'*

45. THE RAIN-MAKER.—I.

A Story of Early Days in South Africa.

About a hundred and twenty years ago a young man, named Robert Moffat, settled in a lonely part of South Africa. During his work of telling the story of the Bible to the people he had many strange adventures and narrow escapes. This story is told in one of his books.

Words : **grateful** **miracle**
 complained **drought**

- Find out :* (1) Why did the people send for the Rain-maker ?
(2) Was the Rain-maker a real worker of magic or a fraud ? Give your reasons for your answer.

I

Day after day, month after month, the sun had shone from a sky of deep blue. In some parts of the world—in England, for example—people would have been grateful for the splendid weather ; but here, in this lonely corner of South Africa, the endless sunshine brought nothing but sadness.

The seed which the African women had sown in the ground lay without growing, and the grass had long since withered. The oxen, sheep, and goats were thin and hungry-looking; and the people feared that they themselves would, before long, die of hunger and thirst.

One day someone said, 'Let us send over the hills for the great Rain-maker of whom we have heard so much. In his country he commands the clouds to pour forth their rain, and the rivers to come down in floods.'

'Yes!' cried a hundred voices. 'Let us send at once for the Rain-maker!'

So a band of messengers went over the hills to the country where the Rain-maker dwelt. When they had found him, they gave him their message.

'Come over to our land,' they said, 'and if you bring rain in plenty, your riches shall be beyond counting. Your flocks shall cover the hills; you shall wash your hands in milk; and you shall be blessed by all.'

'These are good promises,' answered the Rain-maker. 'I shall go.' At once the party set off on their return journey.

As they came near the chief village, a great crowd came to welcome the Rain-maker. Just then, as if by magic, a flash of lightning lit up

THE RAIN-MAKER



the sky, a peal of thunder was heard, and rain began to fall.

‘Those are my fiery spears in the heavens,’ boasted the Rain-maker to the excited people, ‘and that is my voice in the clouds. Let the women sow their seed this year on the hillsides, for the rivers shall flood the valleys.’

‘Long live the Rain-maker!’ cried the people with one voice.

The rain that fell soon disappeared in the hot, sandy soil, and before long the sun was shining as brightly as ever. Soon the people complained that the Rain-maker had not brought enough rain.

‘How can you expect heavy rains when I receive only sheep and goats as presents,’ said the Rain-maker. ‘Give me a good fat ox and I shall make the clouds give forth their rain.’

The people gave him a fat ox, but rain did not fall, and soon they were complaining as loudly as ever.

Then, one day, raindrops were felt again. How the people shouted for joy! ‘It is a miracle! It is the Rain-maker’s doing!’ they cried. ‘Let us hasten to his hut and watch him at his magic work.’

In a crowd they rushed to the Rain-maker’s hut to praise him for his work—but *the Rain-maker was fast asleep!*

‘So the rain is not his doing after all!’ they exclaimed in such angry tones that the man was roused from his slumber.

At once the Rain-maker saw what had happened. He pointed to a woman who was at work outside his hut. ‘See, what is my wife doing there?’ he asked.

‘She is churning butter in a skin,’ said several of the crowd.

‘Foolish children!’ said the Rain-maker in a voice of deep scorn. ‘Know you not that she is churning rain at my command? It is I who have made the rain! It is I who have ended the drought!’

At once the anger of the people was turned to wonder. ‘Long live the Rain-maker!’ they cried again and again.

46. THE RAIN-MAKER.—II.

Words : baboon blemish deceived

Find out : (1) What did the Rain-maker tell the people to do in order to bring rain?
(2) What happened to the Rain-maker?

I

As before, the rain did not last long, and soon complaints were heard again.

‘Impatient people!’ cried the Rain-maker. ‘Bring me a young, living baboon, without fault or blemish, and you shall have rain in plenty.’

THE RAIN-MAKER



The people shook their heads as they set off, for well they knew that it was no easy matter to catch a baboon alive. After a long chase, however, they captured a young baboon and brought it to the Rain-maker. Still the people waited in vain for the promised rain.

‘You need not be surprised that no rain falls,’ said the Rain-maker. ‘I asked for a baboon without fault or blemish, and what have you brought me? A baboon with a scratch in one ear and some hairs missing from his tail. I will give you one more chance. If you roast and

THE RAIN-MAKER

eat a lion's heart, I shall make the clouds melt above your heads.'

After another long chase, a lion was killed, and its heart was roasted and shared among the people, but still the rain did not fall. Meanwhile the drought continued. The country lay parched, the animals were starving, and the people, as usual, were growing angry and discontented.

'Why blame me?' said the Rain-maker. 'How can I bring rain when the white man who lives among you does his best to drive it away? Kill him and his family and the rain will come.'

The people shook their heads. 'Why should we kill the white man?' said they. 'He treats us well, and gives us medicines to cure us when we are ill. If anyone is to be killed, it should be you, for have you not deceived us and made false promises of great rains?'

Thereupon the Rain-maker was seized and brought before the chief men of the tribe to be judged. There it was decided that he should be put to death.

Just then Robert Moffat heard what was about to happen. He hastened to the village

court, and arrived there just in time to save the Rain-maker from the spears of the angry people.

‘If you do not want the man,’ said Moffat earnestly, ‘send him back to his home. Killing him will not bring you rain.’

The village chief looked at Moffat in surprise. ‘In truth, the ways of the white man are strange,’ he said. ‘A short time ago this deceiver asked us to kill you. Now you bid us let him go free.’

In the end the chief allowed the Rain-maker to return to his own country; and indeed the man was very glad to leave behind him the land where all his magic had failed.

Still no rain fell, and once more the grumbings of the people were heard. This time, however, they blamed Moffat and his family.

‘Woe to him who made us send the Rain-maker away!’ said some. ‘We should have sent the white man away instead, for it is he, without a doubt, who keeps the clouds beyond the mountains.’

One day a crowd of warriors, waving their spears on high, appeared at the door of Moffat’s house. Fiercely they told the white man that he must leave at once, or else be killed along with his wife and child.

THE RAIN-MAKER



‘You may kill us and burn our house,’ declared Moffat bravely, ‘but we shall not move from here.’

The people were taken aback by this bold answer. ‘In truth,’ said they, as they went back to the village, ‘the white man must have ten lives, when he is so fearless of death.’

3

After that, Moffat and his family were left in peace to work among the African people. He told them that they must await with patience the coming of the rain, and that they must not trust the false magic of rain-makers.

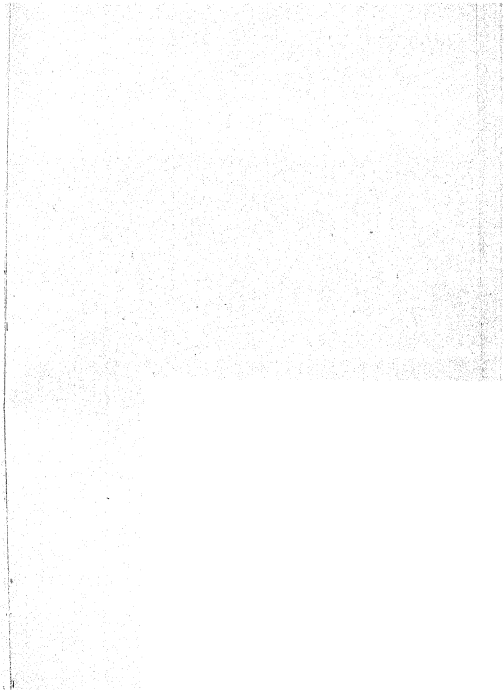
At last, after seven years of drought and barren fields, the rain did come. Grass and crops and shrubs began to grow again, and water ran in the rivers; but even to-day the country where Moffat worked is one of the driest spots in the world.

47. RAIN IN SUMMER.

How beautiful is the rain !
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain !
How it clatters along the roofs,
Like the tramp of hoofs !
How it gushes and struggles out
From the throat of the overflowing spout !

Across the window-pane
It pours and pours ;
And swift and wide,
With a muddy tide,
Like a river down the gutter roars
The rain, the welcome rain !

The sick man from his room
Looks at the twisted brooks ;
He can feel the cool
Breath of each little pool ;
His fevered brain
Grows calm again,
And he breathes a blessing on the rain.



RAIN IN SUMMER

Near at hand,
From under the sheltering trees,
The farmer sees
His pastures, and his fields of grain
As they bend their tops
To the beating drops
Of the unceasing rain.
He counts it as no sin
That he sees therein
Only his own thrift and gain.

In the country, on every side,
Where far and wide,
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,
Stretches the plain,
To the dry grass and the drier grain
How welcome is the rain !

H. W. Longfellow.

